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# THE MODERN CHURCHMAN

A monthly Magazine to maintain the cause of
TRUTH, FREEDOM, and COMPREHENSIVENESS
in the Anglican Communion.

EDITOR: H. D. A. MAJOR, B.D.

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THE

# MODERN CHURCHMAN

By identifying the new learning with heresy, you make orthodoxy synonymous with ignorance.—*Erasmus.*

A State without the means of change is without the means of its conservation.—*Edmund Burke.*

No. 10. JANUARY, 1923. Vol. XII.

## GNOSTIC OR AGNOSTIC?

By W. Robinson, B.A., B.Sc., Principal of Overdale College.

WHENEVER there is aversion to activity, depression sets in. So it was with Henri Frédérici Amiel, whose *Journal* presents us with the picture of a man who feared to venture; but knew his own weakness and could write of himself.

> 'I have too much imagination, conscience, and penetration, and not enough character.'

The history of spiritual pilgrimage presents us with few sadder pictures than that of Amiel. If he had been an obscurantist, we should have felt no surprise at such an utterance as the following:

> 'There remains the question whether the greatest problems which have ever been guessed on earth had not better have remained buried in the brain which had found the key to them, and whether the deepest thinkers—those whose hand has been boldest in drawing aside the veil, and their eye keenest in fathoming the mystery beyond it—had not better, like the Prophet of Ilion, have kept for Heaven and Heaven alone secrets and mysteries which human tongue cannot truly express.'

But he was no obscurantist and the tragedy is all the greater. Baffled with the problems of life he sought throughout to face them and to solve them, but he was never sure of himself and shrank from committing his thoughts to activity. He would take no responsibility in adding to the solution of the problems:

> 'Responsibility mortally envenoms grief, and as an act is essentially voluntary, therefore I act as little as possible.' 'Every hope

> is an egg from which a serpent may issue instead of a dove, becau every joy missed is a stab, because every seed confided to destir contains an ear of grief which the future may develop.'

Faith in the end means *activity;* 'the Word is very nigh t thee in thy mouth that thou mayest *do* it'; 'He that *doeth* th will of my Father'; 'If any man wills to *do* the will of Goc he shall know of the doctrine'; and it was this quality c action which Amiel lacked. Better far in the baffling per plexity to have thrown oneself, like Newman, into the arms c an infallible Church; better far, like many an ardent Protes tant, to have trusted in an infallible Bible; better far to hav staked all on the eternal progress of mechanical force in Nature than to have remained inactive for fear of taking one fata step. It was this horror of being deceived which haunte Amiel like a nightmare, and at every stage held him back fro pronouncing upon the perplexities which baffle us, and fro carrying his pronouncements into activity. He was noble i that he was baffled; but he failed in that he refrained fro acting upon partial knowledge or upon mere working hyp theses. Professor William James was more true to life, and think more Christian, when he said:

> 'I have also a horror of being duped, but I can believe that wor things than being duped may happen to a man in this world. Clifford exhortation to us to avoid committing ourselves to any form of beli lest we should discover later on that we had believed wrongly, is li a general informing his soldiers that it is better to keep out of batt altogether than to risk a single wound.'

A man is never made until he has committed himself— he may commit himself wrongly, but he cannot be wrong the act of committing himself: activity is the very breath life. But there are some who will not commit themselv unless they are sure of an *infallible* guide; either an infallib Church, or an infallible Bible, or an infallible intellect; a they are ready to find fault with any system which does n present the marks of absolute infallibility—in other wor they lack faith; for faith is that which makes us venture c into the deep beyond our knowledge.

The long history of religion and philosophy reflects ma struggle to solve the problems of the universe in which he fin himself. He has not altogether failed. There are perple

ties which have gone for ever, but new ones have arisen in their place; and there are others which remain more or less as they were milleniums ago. In the latter class can be placed the problems of evil. No wonder that in his struggles with the baffling problems of life man has often committed himself to some system which has offered a final solution, and has ceased from struggling. Systems of thought which have taught that *activity* is the greatest evil, and religions which have offered salvation on terms of absolute passivity, have not been uncommon. On the ethical side the cult of 'perfect holiness' has always had its devotees. Gnosticism has flourished in almost every country and influenced almost every organised religion. Perhaps there are few who have attempted to think out the problems of life who have not suffered the temptation to become gnostics and to posit a final solution of the mysteries of our existence. In particular, Christianity has often been presented, and still is in many quarters presented, as a religion which will rid us of all baffling perplexities and leave no mysteries to be revealed. In a religion which is based on such a perfect revelation of God as that given in Jesus Christ, the temptation has been very strong to proclaim it as absolute in every sense, as infallible and complete. But is Christianity really such a system—in other words, is it gnostic or is it agnostic? Does it present us with a perfect knowledge of God and the mysteries of eternity, or is its revelation partial and conditioned by limitations?

We cannot be too grateful for the change of outlook, which has come over Christian thinking during the last half-century—a change which has taught us to look for the revelation of God through human *media*, and therefore a revelation naturally conditioned in some measure by human limitations—a change also which has led us to see how gradual must be the progress of revelation, and how, whilst in many ways it is in advance of human thinking, yet it has always been conditioned by the intellectual and moral development of those to whom and through whom it came. Not the least advantage which has come to us is a clearer conception of the conditions and implications of the Incarnation; so that Christianity has come to be described as the faith of the Incarnation. God's supreme

revelation of Himself is given to man through the limitation of human nature. If this be true of the Word who becam flesh, how much more must it be so of the written word Christ said to His disciples, 'I have many things to tell yo but ye cannot bear them now,' and He promised that th Spirit should guide the Church into all the truth, a proces which is still in progress. Even now, after nineteen centurie of Christian experience, we but imperfectly comprehend Go and His workings. Whether in the realm of science, or philo sophy, or criticism, we solve problem after problem, it is onl to find ourselves faced with a hundred new problems, whic invite us to come on to the attack. If it were not so, life, a we know it, would be dull indeed. Einstein has not presente us with an escape from every dilemma which faced us in ou scheme of knowledge, he has but given us a new 'jumping o place' from which to plunge into the sea of knowledge; a ne vantage point from which to view the universe.

Yet still we hear men claim that Christianity is a religio founded on an infallible Bible or an infallible Church, and tha *faith* is simply accepting everything which the Bible or th Church declares as though it were a final, complete, and perfe revelation of all there is or can be in God and His universe To such minds the Gospel is *simple*, and faith means quiescen acceptance—it must never criticise, never struggle, never b perplexed. It does not strike them that simplicity may be mark of shallowness; that a thing may be so explained that it explained away; that after all there is a certain romance abou life, and to take away this romance is to take away life itsel When one speaks of *difficulty* to such minds, they will hav none of it—everything is so easy to them and so simple—be sides Christianity has given us perfect knowledge, and we hav no right to be puzzled. Even God is reduced to somethin simple, and there is in no sense any doctrine of God, nor an problem connected with His Being. It is useless to argue wit people who boast of their perfect gnosis, as Athanasius argue with those of his day, and to say 'Thou knowest God? Wh dost thou know of the ant?' They are convinced that Chri tianity from the beginning has been a system which bring perfect knowledge. But how far did Christianity claim to

a religion which would solve every problem of life and dispel every mystery about God? Did it ever make such an arrogant claim? Every piece of writing which has come down to us, and which bears upon the problem, including the New Testament itself, shows most clearly that Christianity was agnostic (in the best sense of the word) rather than gnostic. The early influence of the gnostic system upon Christianity is not now disputed, and there are places where the New Testament itself throws light on the earlier stages of the conflict and is itself illuminated when we bear in mind the conflict which was taking place. But there is one passage in St. Paul, which can scarcely be taken to have any relationship to a gnostic problem, but which shows most clearly how his doctrine of God was, so far as gnosticism and agnosticism are concerned, like that doctrine which had been taught in Judaism. It is the passage which closes his immortal argument on Jews and Gentiles: 'O the depths of the riches, both of the *wisdom* and the *knowledge* of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past tracing out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been His counsellor? or who hath first given to Him and it shall be recompensed unto Him again? For of Him, and through Him, and unto Him, are all things.' It is easy to see from the two Corinthian Epistles, as we have them, that St. Paul had to treat with some who were claiming a superior gnosis, and the occasion demanded some measure of sarcasm. In I. Cor. xiii he is concerned to point out two things (1) how inferior are the *charismata* to faith, hope and love, (2) how even the *charismata* can bring no immediate knowledge of God. Even he who had been caught up into heaven had to say, 'Now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I have been known,' and he could remind them that in their present state it was only possible to see in a mirror darkly, or in a riddle. In the incomparable Epistle to the Ephesians, when St. Paul himself has reached the solution of some problems which had formerly baffled him, he speaks of his constant prayer on behalf of his converts. At first sight the passage in *Ephesians* (iii, 14-19) may appear to teach that it is possible to attain to a full knowledge of God; for he speaks of Christ dwelling in their hearts through faith to the end that they being

rooted and grounded in love may be strong to apprehend with all the saints (most likely referring to the departed) what is the *breadth* and *length* and *height* and *depth* of the love of Christ. This seems like a full knowledge, especially when he closes the passage with the words, 'that ye may be filled unto *all the fulness of God.*' But between this conclusion and what has gone before he is careful to explain—lest they should develop a gnostic arrogance—that the process of knowing the love of God is infinite, for he describes that love as *passing knowledge.*

It has been claimed that when we pass over from the Pauline to the Johannine literature we meet with a different type of Christianity. Faith as the principle of religion has disappeared, and its place has been taken by knowledge (*gnosis*). The main thing is to know the living God, to be counted among the gnostics. Clement of Alexandria could claim on these grounds that the orthodox Christians were the true gnostics, and that faith was only the first stage in Christian experience, whilst *knowledge* was the second stage. But when we realise that, at least the *First Epistle of John*, if not the *Gospel* also, was written to counteract gnostic tendencies; and when we interpret it historically, we see that it is only saying in different phraseology what St. Paul had said. Indeed, John clearly contends, as against certain superior gnostics, that we by no means possess any complete knowledge of ourselves and our destiny; much less therefore can we have any complete knowledge of God. He is careful to point out that, 'Now are we children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be.' What then do we know? How far can we be sure of our destiny, and certain that we are on safe ground? Have we no guarantee? Is there no certainty in life? Are we reduced in the sphere of knowledge to absolute scepticism? By no means! The Christian has certain definite assurance—a knowledge, limited it is true, but none the less certain. 'We know that when He shall be manifested, we shall be like Him.' This is the faith of the Incarnation. Christianity was built on 'God manifest in the flesh.' To John and his company the great thing was that they had experienced Him, they had seen Him, handled Him, known Him to the fullest extent of limited human knowledge. Moreover, what they had seen of God in Jesus Christ

had taught them that He was Love, and the cross had shown them love in action. It was in keeping with the nature of God, as the writer of *Hebrews* had put it, to suffer. He was *Light* and there could be no darkness in Him. He was *Spirit*, and all the evil powers of the demon-world could not prevail against Him. He was *the Resurrection* and the *Life*, and even death was of no avail to remove men from His care: He was capable of coming into relation with His creatures and needed no host of mediating angels. This was enough on which to stake all, and in the end finality of knowledge would be granted, for, says he, 'We shall see Him *as He is*.' Persecution might be rife; the darkest clouds might threaten to overwhelm the growing community, but in spite of the baffling mysteries of life which confronted them, they could step forward fearlessly with a confidence born of the fact of the Incarnation. God and life might not be completely known, but sufficient was known to warrant the struggle and to inspire confidence.

And so Christianity offers itself not as an arrogant faith claiming to solve all mysteries and dissolve all perplexities. It is a mark of shallowness to confess to having no perplexities. Principal Jacks has well said, 'That which in us feels perplexity is the noblest part of us: if it were not so I should despair'; and it is when we regard Christianity as something which dispels all our perplexities, that we create an insoluble perplexity for ourselves. The Religion of Christ consists in facing perplexities and battling with difficulties with the help of God. We must take trouble as it comes and we must rise superior to it. It is only so that we can be made God-like. There is no religion—certainly not the Religion of Christ—which can dispel all difficulties and solve all mysteries. The best that is in us calls for *a life of faith, not of gnosis*.

# SOME MODERN CULTS

By Rev. Canon C. H. P. Price, B.D., Rector of Kilbride, Ireland.

THE outstanding contributions of America hitherto to religious progress would appear to be Mormonism and Christian Science, Joseph Smith and Mrs. Eddy are its twin *illuminati*. The former of these systems, born in an age cruder than the present, and endowed with a fantastic revelation, is perhaps hardly a serious danger. But it cannot be said that Christian Science is negligible. In the United States it is assuming almost national proportions, while among Anglo-Saxon peoples—though not among the Latin races—it is demonstrating how insidious still is the power of superstition over multitudes who think themselves immune from it. The wide diffusion of Christian Science is not perhaps very difficult to account for. Apart from its shrewd business methods and the cleverness of its propaganda, it exhibits that note of certainty and imperiousness which attracts many towards the Church of Rome. We do not realise how many there are who prefer arrogance to humility in a Church, and to whom lofty pretentions are the most convincing note of divinity. And then, it is an idealistic reaction against the tyranny of scientific materialism. A false idealism, indeed; but it passes with the unwary, and at the time when it arose the bondage of a short-sighted science was more ruthless than it is to-day. Reactions are wont to exaggerate, and the theory of Christian Science is, I think, as limited and undiscerning as the theories of Clodd and Haeckel which it antagonizes. It cannot be destined to hold its ground. Moreover, Christian Science promises, and often confers, a specific against worry and carking fever to which the nervous and overstrained American temperament is so exposed.

But undoubtedly the strongest bulwarks of Christian Science are its cures and its doctrine of the non-reality of evil. On the former of these a word or two will suffice. There have been cures, and they are regarded as evidential. We can admit the former, but must strenuously deny the latter claim. For healers

of every brand have successes to adduce. The Spiritualists, the Theosophists, the Emmanuel Movement, Lourdes, Our Lady of Pompei—no system is so poor but it can sport feathers to wear in its cap. And yet all these attribute their triumphs to doctrines mutually exclusive and incompatible. They cannot all be true, and it is much more likely that all are false, or at least irrelevant. We cannot explain the phenomena, but we may be quite convinced that they are not wrought by the agencies their ministers assert. Suggestion is the general name for the force engaged, but the name explains little, and the success of the suggestion seems to depend hardly at all upon the nature of the fetish used to set it in motion. Mrs. Eddy, indeed, admits that her numerous rivals have cures to boast of, but since her own are alone legitimate, these are the outcome of sorcery or what she calls natural magic. She remembers that the magicians of Egypt were able, up to a certain point, to cap Moses' demonstrations before Pharoah, but it was by diabolical aid. This argument, however, is unconvincing and decidedly two-handed. Moreover, it is inconsistent with her philosophy.

Christian Science claims to be a discovery made by Mrs. Eddy in 1866. She observed that our Lord's miracles of healing, as recorded in the New Testament, were authoritative and invariably successful; that His Apostles, similarly, were charged to heal the sick; but that the Church has forgotten how to do this, and consequently has failed to execute His commission. The principle involved had been lost. This principle she rediscovered and commended as the great secret to her generation. By the application of this principle it is claimed that sin, disease, and death, the three great enemies of our race, can be overcome by us as surely as they were by Christ. Christian Science, therefore, is the application of a revealed law to the ills of which flesh is heir. It is thus sharply to be distinguished from all other forms of faith healing with which it is sometimes confounded. All alike confront disease without physical aid, but there the likeness ends. Faith-healers acknowledge the reality of the evil, they pray for its removal, their efforts are tentative. The attitude of the Scientist is quite different. He professes to repeat the work of Christ, which consists in the application of a principle which anyone who accepts it and lives

in the spirit of it may put into operation. And so he does not pray for healing—he heals, radically and completely. You would not pray that the law of gravitation should vindicate you. And what of the momentous principle charged with such sovereign efficacy? Our Lord had used it. He had taught it to His disciples; but strangely enough, when its value is considered, future ages had let it fall into abeyance, and the Church turned aside to the vanity of drugs, which the Master had never used nor sanctioned, until in 1866 Mrs. Eddy arose and re-discovered the forgotten wisdom. This she embodied in the four following propositions:—(1) God is all; (2) God is good, good is mind; (3) God, Spirit, being all, nothing is matter; (4) Life, God, omnipotent good, deny evil, sin, disease. The truth of these dogmas was guaranteed to Mrs. Eddy by their astonishing property of yielding the same sense when read backwards as forwards.

It is the assertion, the repetition and the assimilation of these truths which cure diseases. Chinese therapeutics consist in beating a drum to expel the evil spirit from the patient. Christian Science treatment repeats a formula to disabuse him of a similar delusion. It is remarkable how closely theories of mental healing and suggestion approach the demonology of a prescientific age. Because God is all and is good there can, it is inferred, be no place in the universe for anything that is not good—therefore, evil has no existence. Spirit, moreover, is opposed to matter; and since God is Spirit, matter is unreal. Its seeming reality is an error due to mortal mind—that vain and delusive faculty which has usurped the place of Divine mind in the individual. To mortal mind and its processes are due all the evils of sense which afflict our race. It would persuade us that the body can feel pain and weariness, but this is impossible, for matter is no more capable of sensations than a wheel can be tired of going round. It is the human mind which produces pain; matter exists in human belief only. To it also is due the efficacy of drugs and the deadliness of poisons. It teaches us to believe that food nourishes our bodies, and that lapse of time brings with it the infirmities of age—that death is a necessity and sin a reality, whereas these are all delusions, for Spirit is the only reality of Being. Mortal Mind, then, is a liar; and the existence of matter, with its attendant evils, is the *great*

delusion. Now, these positions are obviously inconsistent with orthodox Christianity, and they have often been criticised theologically, but so far without any very notable result. It seems to me, however, that the fundamental errors are philosophical, and should be dealt with by a trained metaphysician. The task is not an easy one. Mrs. Eddy was an uneducated woman; she had probably never heard of modern philosophy, and uses its terms in the loosest and most inaccurate way—to fight her metaphysics is like fighting a feather-bed. If, however, Dr. Rashdall, or Dean Inge, or Archbishop Darcy would treat the subject with trenchant simplicity from the philosophical standpoint, much confusion might be removed from the popular mind. It occurs to me that, meeting these Scientists on their own ground, we might urge that if God be all in the sense they claim, there can be no room in the universe for error or for a source of error—that, accordingly, mortal mind, the fountain of delusion, does not exist, or else that its reports are not erroneous. I can see no escape from this dilemma; it appears to be fatal. Moreover, if the allness of a God of truth be compatible with the existence of error, why may not the allness of a God of love and goodness be compatible with the existence of sin and suffering? In which case we find ourselves exactly where we were before Mrs. Eddy's remarkable discovery. There is confusion also in the statement that pain exists only in the mind, a confusion between thought and the physical organ of thought. Pain is due, not to an intellectual error, but to an irritated nerve tingling in the brain. The word mind is employed in two senses, and the discrepancy is concealed. Again, if matter does not exist, its well-being must be just as illusory as its pain, good health as imaginary as bad; both are qualities of the non-existent. Why, then, one might ask, exalt into a religion the effort to transform one non-reality into another? And once more, the proposition that God is good and God is all is submitted in the first instance to mortal mind for acceptance. But if mortal mind, like St. Paul's Cretan, is a liar, how can we trust its verdict? How can we be sure that God is good? Our initial premiss goes, and the only logical outcome is agnosticism. The truth is that Christian Science is guilty of the same fallacy that Materialism employed to disprove mind, and that the Vatican invoked to establish infallibility—appealing in

each case to the human reason and then kicking it aside. Dr. Salmon epitomised the argument long ago as the effort of a man to lift himself up by his own waistband.

Of course, though she does not know it, Mrs. Eddy, when she speaks of God as all, means what philosophers call the Absolute or unconditioned. But an Absolute implies a relative, and she is unaware that the problem of thought has always been to co-ordinate these two. Nor need I stay to point out the banality of a system which concentrates, as this does, on the pains and aches of the body. These, after, all, form but one element in human suffering. Extremes meet in this absorption. Materialism, thrown out by the door, comes in at the window, and remains master of the situation. And the Christian Science gospel is that life's adventure, which we had imagined to be real and serious, is nothing but a make-believe, a game of hide-and-seek. It is no part of our purpose to belittle the good of which Christian Science has been the instrument. It has dissipated a multitude of imaginary and some real ailments. It has improved tempers, diffused serenity and cheerfulness, repressed morbid and unwholesome fancies, won back many from Materialism to a shadowy Theism, shifted the centre of gravity for numbers from a reliance on force to a belief in the paramount power of spiritual values. But, on the other hand, it has killed very many who might have lived; it is a pitiless Juggernaut which demands the self-immolation of its worshippers; and even if it cures your gout, it demands your soul in return. It is an infallible system, like the Roman Church, which must be all or nothing, and its supporters ought to consider whether they are prepared to welcome the inevitable results of its predominance. Were it to prevail, the medical and nursing professions would disappear, hospitals would be closed, provision for public health would cease, natural research would no longer be prosecuted in any of its branches, a solvent would be applied to every terrestrial enterprise, until, in an orgy of reaction, outraged humanity would expunge the very words, mind, spirit, God, from its vocabulary.

My criticisms have been mainly negative. But we need positive doctrines to offer in place of those we reject—a doctrine of spirit, of knowledge, above all, perhaps, of matter. I do not think we ought to assume or to assert that matter possesses

# THE CHURCHMEN'S UNION NEWSLETTER

## JANUARY, 1923

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### NOTES.

Events move so quickly now-a-days that the Church Congress is already ancient history, but it may be worth recording, as we have not had an opportunity before, that the Churchmen's Union was represented at Sheffield by the Bishop of St. Edmundsbury and Ipswich, who preached one of the three Congress sermons; by Mr. Fred. Hughes, who read a paper on 'The Gospel and Business'; by the Dean of Carlisle, whose paper on 'The Present Value of the Creeds,' was published in the November number of the *Modern Churchman*; and by the Rev. H. R. L. Sheppard, whose speech will be remembered by its timely warning against the objectionable practice of what he characterized as 'official love.' The list might be extended by including the names of those who are known to sympathise with our aims, and it may be doubted if any church society was so well represented at the Congress as the Churchmen's Union.

In the recent election of Proctors to the Lower House of Convocation, the following members of the Churchmen's Union were returned:—London, the Hon. the Rev. Canon Adderley; Ely, the Rev. E. S. Woods; Gloucester, the Rev. Canon H. A. Wilson; Manchester, the Rev. R. G. Parsons; Birmingham, Bishop Hamilton Baynes.

The Rev. G. F. Irwin, B.D., vicar of Wallington, Surrey, and Examining Chaplain to the Bishop of Chelmsford, has been appointed by the Simeon's Trustees to the vicarage of St. Margaret's, Ipswich.

The Rev. Harold Anson, Chairman of the Guild of Health, has withdrawn his acceptance of the rectory of Great Haseley, Oxfordshire, to which he was lately appointed by the Dean and Chapter of Windsor, and will be attached to the staff of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, for special work.

The Rev. C. F. Russell, Head Master of Southampton Grammar School, and sometime Fellow of Pembroke College, Cambridge, has taken for the subject of his Hulsean Lectures 'Some Doctrines of Religion considered in relation to the concept of Natural Law.' The first lecture, which was introductory, and the second, on 'Providence,' were delivered at Cambridge last term. The third, on 'Punishment and Forgiveness,' and the fourth, on 'Atonement and Suffering,' which complete the course, will be delivered during the Lent term. The lectures will be published, probably under the shorter title of *Religion and Natural Law*.

The Churchmen's Union now numbers 1077 members. During the past year 104 new members joined the Union, showing a net gain of 20 over losses by death, resignation, and non-payment of subscription. A further analysis shows that five new members joined from the United States of America, two from Tasmania, and one each from Brazil, Japan,

China, India, Ceylon and Mauritius. Among new members may be mentioned the Rev. J. M. Thompson, Fellow and Bursar of Magdalen College, Oxford; the Rev. G. W. Hudson Shaw, Rector of St. Botolph's, Bishopsgate; the Rev. Canon B. H. Streeter, of Hereford Cathedral; Sir Francis Younghusband, K.C.I.E.; His Honour Judge Moore; and Mrs. Percival, widow of the late Bishop of Hereford.

## LONDON BRANCH.

(Hon. Secretary, Philip Bagenal, Esq., O.B.E., to Clifford Street, Bond Street, London, W.1.)

The first quarterly meeting of the London Branch will be held at University College School, Hampstead, by kind invitation of Mr. Guy Kendall, the Headmaster, on January 16th, at 5 o'clock, when the Rev. Alfred Fawkes will open a discussion on 'Divorce Reform.'

The *Westminster and City Group* (Hon. Sec., Mrs. Pownall, 8 Ashley Place, Westminster, S.W.1.) is meeting once a month at St. Andrew's Vicarage, Westminster, and the book selected for discussion is Dr. Glover's *Jesus of History*. There are 27 members in this group, and it is hoped that when the work of the Churchmen's Union becomes more widely known and better understood, many new members will join.

The *Kensington and Chelsea Group* (Hon. Sec., Miss E. M. Beaumont, 22 Argyll Mansions, Chelsea, S.W.3) has met fortnightly, through the kind invitation of Sir Lawrence and Lady Jones, at 39 Harrington Gardens, and though numbers are small, the discussions have been of great interest. Parts of Dean Inge's *Personal Idealism and Mysticism* have been read, but it is felt that it would be of greater value to exchange views on some subjects as are prominent in the minds of many, rather than to restrict discussion to the contents of a particular book.

The *Hampstead and Golders Green Group* (Hon. Secs., Mrs. Brock, 40 Steeles Road, South Hampstead, N.W.3, and Guy Kendall, Esq., 10 Ellerdale Road, N.W.3) held three afternoon meetings for ladies last autumn, at two of which members contributed papers. The first, by Miss Gervis, was a lucid and able exposition of the concluding portion of Dean Rashdall's *Plain Words*. At the December meeting, Mrs. Gair opened what proved to be a very interesting discussion on Spiritual versus Materialistic conceptions of Christian work and method.

## BRISTOL BRANCH.

(Hon. Secretary, Miss Alice Gardner, 8 Canynge Road, Clifton, Bristol.)

The Bristol Branch met twice during November. The first meeting was held at the Church House, Clifton, on Thursday, the 2nd November. The Rev. J. R. Wilkinson, B.D., was elected Vice-President, and in the regrettable absence of Canon Gamble, was voted into the chair. Mr. Meade-King and the Rev. R. G. Griffiths were elected on the Committee.

The Rev. A. N. Bax read a most able and interesting paper on the recent Conference at Oxford. He gave the drift of most of the papers then read, especially that of Professor Widgery on *Christianity and the East*, and that of Professor Soothill on *Buddhism*. A long discussion followed on the topics suggested, particularly on the differences in religious type in different races, on the extent to which religions may borrow from one another, and on the work undertaken by missionaries. In summing up the

discussion Mr. Wilkinson remarked on the hopeful character of the Oxford Conference, and a vote of thanks was passed to Mr. Bax for his excellent paper.

A second meeting of the Branch was held in the Deanery, by kind invitation of the Dean of Bristol, on the 29th November. The Rev. J. R. Wilkinson (Vice-President) was in the chair. The Dean read a paper, shortly to be published as part of a book on *Personality in Religion*. The object of the book, the Dean explained, and especially of the part which he read, was to supply a philosophic groundwork for enlightened evangelical religion. A discussion followed in which some helps and hindrances to reunion of Churches and parties were discussed. A sincere vote of thanks to the Dean for his paper and hospitality was passed.

## HERTS BRANCH.

(Hon. Secretary, H. F. Walker, Esq., 29 Beaconsfield Road, St. Albans.)

The meeting of the Herts Branch on Saturday, the 28th October, was of a unique character. The ordinary procedure was abandoned, and there was a large attendance of members and visitors, who had come, at Dr. Bone's invitation, to listen to an exposition of the 'Parsifal' version of the Holy Grail. This took the form of a recital of the greater part of Wagner's music, of which a skilful arrangement had been made for pianoforte and chamber organ. The music was impressively rendered by Mr. Eric Sinkinson at the piano, and Dr. Bone at the organ. Before the recital, the Chairman, the Rev. H. J. Trueman, read a short dissertation on the connection between the pagan stories of the Grail and its Christianised version, which was the joint production of Dr. Bone and the late Mrs. Bone. This was followed by a history and outline of Wagner's 'Parsifal,' and at intervals during the recital, portions of the text of the opera were read. The audience were provided with a short analytical programme, explaining the leading motifs, and by this means they were enabled to get a clearer understanding of the construction as well as the principal themes of the opera. The whole recital, which was preceded by prayer and concluded with the singing of a hymn, was highly appreciated by those who were privileged to hear it.

## OXFORD UNIVERSITY BRANCH.

(Hon. Secretary: R. D. Richardson, Esq., Ripon Hall, Oxford.)

A branch of the Churchmen's Union has been formed in Oxford University as the outcome of six sermons preached during the Trinity Term, 1922, under the auspices of the Churchmen's Union. The following were elected Vice-Presidents: The Rev. Canon B. H. Streeter, M.A. (Queen's), the Rev. A. J. Carlyle, D.Litt. (University), the Rev. H. D. A. Major, B.D. (Ripon Hall), the Rev. J. C. Hardwick, M.A. (Ripon Hall), and the Rev. M. R. Ridley, M.A. (Balliol). Junior members of the University, representing several colleges, were elected to serve on the Committee, of which the Rev. C. W. Emmet, B.D., is chairman. The Branch is at present about thirty strong, including members and associates.

The Committee decided that for the present there should be held during each term, one public meeting, three branch meetings, and one corporate celebration of the Holy Communion.

During the past term there was no time to arrange for a public meeting. The one to be held next term will be addressed by the Dean of St. Paul's.

The branch meetings have been held in Ripon Hall library on alternate Fridays, at 8.30 p.m. At the first meeting, a discussion of 'What the Churchmen's Union is out for' was opened by Mr. J. S. Bezzant (Pembroke); at the second, Mr. Emmet led a discussion on 'A Modernist's View of Professor Lake'; and at the third, Mr. G. F. Allen (University) read a paper entitled 'What I think a Modernist Service should be like.'

The corporate celebration was held at the University Church at 8 a.m. on December 5th.

## DURHAM AND NEWCASTLE BRANCH.

(Hon. Secretary: The Rev. W. Maurice Pryke, St. Aidan's Vicarage, South Shields.)

At a meeting held in Durham on October 16th, a proposal to form a branch of the Churchmen's Union for the Dioceses of Durham and Newcastle was carried unanimously. Canon Cruickshank of Durham, a representative both of the Cathedral Chapter and the University, was elected President. It was resolved that branch meetings should be held three times a year in different localities, and that meetings should be open to non-members who desired to attend. The first meeting was fixed for November 24th at Durham, and it was agreed unanimously that Dr. Rashdall be invited to read a paper.

Dr. Rashdall, having readily accepted the invitation of the members to read the first paper, chose as his subject 'The Present Position of the Liberal Movement in the Church.' The reader gave an interesting survey of the progress of Liberal Christianity in the Church of England during the last forty years. He congratulated those present upon their enterprise in forming a branch of the Churchmen's Union for Durham and Newcastle, emphasising the importance of co-operation, and the need to work strenuously for a better educated clergy.

The next meeting of the branch will be held in South Shields on February 17th, when Canon Cruickshank will read a paper on 'The Revised Version.'

## JUNIOR SECTION.

(Hon. Secretary: The Rev. G. V. W. Sibley, 41 Claremont Square, E.C.1.)

A course of lectures has been arranged to be given at St. Paul's, Covent Garden, by kind permission of the Rector, the Rev. the Hon. J. G. Adderley, on Tuesdays in January and February, as follows:—

January 9th.—'The Holy Spirit.' The Rev. W. R. Matthews, D.D. (Dean of King's College, London).

January 16th.—'The Bible.' The Rev. J. Lloyd Milne, B.A., O.B.E. (Rector of Limehouse).

January 23rd.—'The Church.' The Very Rev. Hastings Rashdall, D.Litt., F.B.A. (Dean of Carlisle).

January 30th.—'The Christian Life.' The Rev. J. C. Hardwick, M.A. (Chaplain of Ripon Hall).

February 6th.—'A Christian State.' Sir John Barran, Bart.

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The Editor will be grateful if the Branch Secretaries will kindly send him an abstract of meetings, and any other communication of general interest, for publication in the *Newsletter*, not later than the 10th March next, to the following address: Rev. F. G. Given-Wilson, Dedham Vicarage, Colchester.

the same kind of reality that we attribute to the Absolute. In proclaiming that God is All, Christian Science is on firm ground. God is, in the higher sense, the only Reality. Let us acknowledge this candidly; sensible objects are but imperfect reproductions of reality. And the soul may even be regarded as the creator of the phenomenal world. But the soul is not, as Christian Science avers, a deluded and lying spirit. It is the faculty which, gazing into the heights above itself, endeavours to translate what it sees there into the limitations of space and time. The sensible world, then, is 'a reflection of the spiritual in the mirror of matter': what we see and feel is not ultimate, indeed, but a symbol; not of falsehood, however, but of truth. As Dean Inge quotes from Isaac Pennington:

> 'All truth is a shadow except the last. But every truth is a substance in its own place, though it be but a shadow in another place. And the shadow is a true shadow, as the substance is a true substance.'

## II.

There has been a remarkable recrudescence of healing activity during the last two years among the orthodox Christian Churches. Rome has not been affected by it, indeed, for she has always had her miraculous waters and wonder-working images. But the Reformed Communions have been stung by the challenge of the Scientists, or else, feeling a little out of touch with the modern soul, have developed a mission to the body, so that what they lose on the swings they may make up on the roundabouts. This popular policy, I will only say, seems to me to be full of pitfalls. Psychological methods of healing are one thing. Religious or spiritual appear to be quite another matter. We must have a doctrine of personality, at present beyond our reach, before we can know what we are doing. We are told that suffering may be healed by faith because suffering is contrary to God's will. But are the natural processes of decay and death contrary to His will? Are we to arrest them by prayer or unction? And what good reason is there to isolate bodily pain from other forms of affliction in the way this claim seems to imply? Hunger and poverty, grief and folly, ignorance and dirt are doubtless also contrary to the will of God, and there are ways of removing them, but no short cuts. We should not dream, for instance,

of trying to repeat the miracle of the loaves in starving Russia because our Lord said: 'Give ye them to eat.'

The miracles of the Gospels, either of feeding or healing, are not for literal reproduction. They are manifestations of power which have to be realised through the processes of nature—seeds which are to be developed with the growth of Christendom—the dynamic from which medicine and sociology and education and philanthropy in all its branches have severally sprung. A universal commission was, indeed, originally issued to twelve men. They were to hand on the motive power and to plant the various seeds. But growing complexity of conditions soon involves a division of labour. The institution of the Seven Deacons is the earliest trace of this. And though the source of power remains one, the streams of activity henceforth diverge. Preach the Gospel and heal the sick was an ordination of two professions. Nowadays the man who preaches the Word is not, *ipso facto*, the man authorised to heal the sick. At one time clergy were the only educators—now the professions are distinct; so it is with theology and therapeutics. The physician, equally with the priest, can claim an office derived from Christ. He can point to a Divine impulse, and is the inheritor of a word of power. I do not believe that direct action by the clergy in the treatment of disease, apart from prayer, is more or less justified than it would be if applied to any other form of human suffering. Let us keep the issues quite clear: Do we hold that we ought to be healers, like the Apostles, in virtue of our ministerial commission? That would be an intelligible position. But then, to be logical, we should have to raise the dead literally, and perhaps be ready, if challenged, to tread on serpents or drink any deadly thing—eat poisoned chocolates, for instance. Nor is it so much want of faith which is likely to debar us from these feats, nervous though we be, as a conviction that the interpretation of Scripture which would invite us to them is radically unsound. But this position, which I have called intelligible, is not consistently maintained. In Protestant Churches faith-healing is conducted by laymen credited with special and extraordinary gifts, and thus the whole basis of the claim appears to break down. These special gifts are, no doubt, genuine. I will assume so much, but, like genius in general, they are individual or charismatic and not official en-

dowments, and seem to have little connection with the apostolic commission. Moreover, they are not a function of Christianity as such. People of all creeds or none possess and exercise them; and it is, I think, of doubtful expediency to stake the credit of religion in any way upon the efficacy of a purely psychic gift. Christian Science and faith-healing alike confront suffering as an evil, real or apparent. No doubt they are right, but they tend to be too anthropocentric, and they do not define their terms—evil to whom? Cat is evil to mouse, but not to the Creator of every warring species. To rise in the scale of being in to transcend evils. That, however, does not mean that the phenomena cease to exist; it only means that they no longer wear the malign aspect they presented on a lower level. We must beware of substituting relative for absolute values. Physical suffering is, of course, an enemy against which nature herself prompts us to wage war. But in doing so we must not be limited by her horizon, or accept her verdict unamended. Such suffering may not be—nay, it cannot be—an evil in the absolute sense at all. It is, rather, an experience we have not yet mastered; which remains, accordingly, for the moment, external and alien. It is sometimes ourselves and not our experiences that are chiefly in need of adjustment.

## III.

Christian Science concentrates on the body, which it denies, and Spiritualism on death, which it abolishes.

As I have not space to discuss its credentials, I will take for granted the claims of Spiritualists as in substance proved, that they have established the continuity of personal existence through death and the fact of communication with those who have passed over. It is a large admission, but yet it is one which will increase the force of the following general reflections: First, What, then, is the life to which these investigations introduce us? It is life on the psychic, not on the spiritual, plane. And here it is worth noticing that the current use of the words spirit and spiritualism in this connection is misleading. Psychical research is a much more appropriate term. σάρξ, ψυχὴ and πνεῦμα denote distinct levels of being, which may overlap, but should not be confused. Now, ψυχικὸς (psychic) in our version is translated natural. That is, perhaps, ambiguous;

but, at all events, it implies that the psychic body is material—of a most subtle and attenuated character no doubt, like the ether which pervades grosser substances, yet distinct from the spirit whose organ and vesture it is. It is often, indeed, known as the etheric body. Spirit proper, however, is impervious to every scientific test; so that we are, in respect of it, where we were before these researches were undertaken—and by such means we shall never get any closer, for spiritual things can only be spiritually discerned. Spiritual, or eternal life—it is the same thing—depends on quality, not on duration. It is moral, not material. 'This is life eternal, to know Thee.' . . . It cannot be discerned by the senses, or proved by scientific processes. Our Lord's post-Resurrection appearances were psychic manifestations, and we have psychic bodies in which our spirits will function when the earthly home of this tabernacle is dissolved. But they are not necessarily immortal, and the kind of existence they manifest is no guarantee of immortality. For immortality and duration are different orders of being.

And therefore my second point is, that Spiritualism, so to miscall it, is not, and can never take the place of, a religion. The prevalent idea that it can is its most serious danger. It certainly robs death of much terror, it promises future recognition, it opens the door to the most dazzling speculations. It is comforting because it seems to minimise the difference between this state and the next. Yet, as hitherto expounded, it has no necessary connection even with Theism, and is but a very refined form of Materialism, which does not seem to contain either the theological or the ethical elements of which religions are composed. It is the shadow of this world reflected on the next.

And lastly, I would observe that if this is so, it seems to follow that Spiritualism does not throw any light either upon the truth or falsehood of existing religions. If Atheism and Agnosticism are possible positions in this world, it is natural to conclude that they may be equally so in the world revealed by psychical research. The spirits who communicate profess themselves of the most various creeds. They continue to believe as they did on earth, and know nothing more than we do about ultimate problems. In fact, they seem to have very little information

of a useful kind to impart upon any topic. And if they were to offer us such, how should we know they were not speaking through their hats? Christianity has little more to gain or lose directly by psychical research than by scientific enquiry in any other field.

These phenomena are interesting, but cannot be vital, to any Christian who accepts the teaching of the New Testament, and that of Christian experience since.

I have been at the Chapel of the Saint Sang in Bruges, where a drop of the Holy Blood is preserved in a phial, and have often wondered at the peculiar reverence paid to this relic by worshippers who profess the doctrine of transubstantiation. Is not the same Sacred Substance to be found on every altar throughout the world?

Psychical Research, then, on the most favourable estimate of it, does not unveil the secret of eternal life. It should not, any more than Psychology, be mistaken for a religion. It is neither a friend nor a foe to existing faiths. And it may be much less than is claimed for it. It may be an *ignis fatuus*. Thought transference will account for many of its marvels, and fraud is undoubtedly the source of others. It is often morbid and grotesque—it sweeps people off their feet and upsets their balance. It seems to cheapen and vulgarise the unseen. And yet the mass and variety and the remarkable character of much of the evidence adduced in support of it preclude us, I think, from ruling it out of court. It stimulates and feeds curiosity—though not, perhaps, of the healthiest kind. Some among us, and they the sanest and most spiritual, will recoil from it with distaste. They will agree with Dean Inge, for whom ghost stories have no attraction, and who would be sorry to have to believe them. Some people, he says, are so much in love with the lower soul-life of our sojourn here that they wish to continue it hereafter; others recognise in this a banishment from the true home of the soul, and have no desire to prolong the conditions of their probation after the probation itself is ended.

Notwithstanding the Dean, may we not still feel some interest in the next stage of our existence—even though it prove to be but a step in our pilgrimage—the place where next we shall pitch our moving tent 'a day's march nearer home'?

# A CENTURY OF ANGLICAN THEOLOGY

## in relation to the general movement of European Thought*

By C. C. J. Webb, M.A., Hon. LL.D., Oriel Professor of the Philosophy of the Christian Religion, Oxford.

### III.

Just as the Rationalism of the seventeenth and earlier eighteenth centuries had awakened a reaction in which a one-sided stress was laid upon sentiment, so the Revolutionary movement of the end of the eighteenth century, which tried as it were to cut off the entail and interrupt the continuity of the political and social tradition of Europe, called forth an enthusiasm for that tradition which had been dormant in the preceding period. The outrage done by the Revolution to historical sentiment evoked a revival of that sentiment, which was to become a marked characteristic of the mind of the nineteenth century and to form one of the chief points of distinction between it and the mind of preceding periods. This evoking of the historical sentiment by a revulsion from the deliberate breach with the past which the French Revolution, carrying into practice the rationalistic ideas and individualistic sentiments of the age which was drawing to its close, had endeavoured to effect, is very well illustrated in the magnificent eloquence of Burke's anti-revolutionary writings with the reassertion in them of that ancient view of society as an organism with a life of its own which the individualism natural to a rationalistic age had tended to obscure. In Burke we hear the new note of enthusiasm for the past, an enthusiasm not such as was common enough among the Revolutionary party for a remote past, which, because it was fancied as discontinuous with the present, could be idealized as a primitive age of simple happiness and unsophisticated virtue; nor even for classical antiquity imagined, as it was by the Revolutionary students of Plutarch's *Lives*, as a vanished world of heroic republican patriotism; but for the past with whose institutions those under

*Delivered as lectures to Clergy of the Diocese of Oxford, 1921.

which the enthusiast himself had been bred were in direct continuity—that is, in the actual case, for the past of mediæval Europe. This enthusiasm shaped the so-called Romantic movement in literature, by which the generation after the Revolution was swept away and whose most typical representative was, on the whole, Sir Walter Scott. But this romantic literature was only one side of a vaster movement. This vaster movement was characterized throughout by a new recognition of the value of elements in life which Rationalism had tended to overlook and which the Revolution had threatened to destroy. The forces of mere reaction which existed and which, after the fall of Napoleon, attained great power in the political and social world, sometimes formed alliances with the higher ideals of the time: and the career of Napoleon himself in more than one way influenced the current of feeling. For as in Napoleon the spirit of Revolutionary France had shown itself aggressive and tyrannical beyond any other, the love of liberty, at any rate outside of France, came to ally itself with loyalty to national institutions which the Napoleonic order had imperilled; while, on the other hand, the solid merits of the highly civilized system of government which Napoleon had substituted in many places for worn out and corrupt ones raised the standard for those among whom he introduced them and inspired new ideals for the future. The incarnation of the spirit of this age, which we may call with the editors of the *Cambridge Modern History* the Age of Restoration was, on the continent of Europe, the great poet Goethe. He had, as I said before, thrown off the sentimentalism of his youth, a sentimentalism ultimately inspired by Rousseau, in writing the *Sorrows of Werther*. He had been among the initiators of the romantic literary movement; his story of *Götz von Berlichingen*, which served Walter Scott for a model, his *Faust* and his *Wilhelm Meister* are the mature achievement of this whole period. He ended his long life, not yet ninety years ago, as the minister of the small German state of Saxe-Weimar, of which his friend the Duke Karl August was sovereign. And in this too he was typical, in his attempt to start anew with the old tradition instead of, as the Revolutionary generation had proposed, without it. There is a famous passage of his *Faust* in which he speaks of those who distinguish and divide and analyse, while the spiritual bond, which holds together the

whole that they thus dissect, escapes them. This was perhaps aimed at Kant, who in part of his work was the philosophical representative of the Revolutionary spirit, rationalistic, analytical, destructive. But there were constructive elements in Kant as well. The stern manliness of his ethics in their contrast with the sentimental laxity which was coming into fashion when they appeared, and the emphasis in the third of his three great treatises, called Critiques, upon the living organism certainly cannot be understood if the spiritual bond is ignored. These constructive elements in Kant, and especially the latter—the emphasis on the organism—Goethe fully appreciated as helping on the work of building up, of reconstruction, which was laid on his generation, whose lot had fallen in the years which followed the great pulling down. It was all of a piece with this that the same Goethe, when sitting in the botanic gardens at Padua under the palm tree which they still show you there, should have struck upon the principle of metamorphosis—that the flowers of plants are but transformed leaves—and so become one of the pioneers of the evolutionary idea, which was to have so great a history in the nineteenth century. Readers of Carlyle know how highly Carlyle rated Goethe's victorious achievement. 'In his inspired melody,' he says in *Sartor Resartus*, 'even in these rag-gathering and rag-burning days, man's life again begins, were it but afar off, to be divine.

The work of another great German, the philosopher Hegel, is to be brought into connexion with the movement of which Goethe is on the whole the most imposing figure. Kant had spoken as if reason made demands which can never be satisfied, creates ideas which can never be verified in an actual experience, gives laws which ought always to be obeyed, but perhaps never are. Hegel, on the other hand, endeavoured to find in studying the world, which he took to be the work of Reason, as it stands before us in the religious and political institutions, in the Church, in the State, in the history alike of social life and of philosophic theory, that which Kant could only find in an unrealized ideal in the critic's mind to which the facts failed to correspond. Thus Hegel helped to turn the current of men's thoughts into two at least of the channels in which they have since been running. By giving history a standing, so to speak, in philosophy, through his doctrine that the true

significance of things and of reality as a whole could not be understood apart from the way in which they had come to be, in which we should try to discover not a mere series of accidents, but the necessary and inevitable unfolding of the nature of whatever we are dealing with—he gave a new dignity to historical study, much as Bacon in his day had given a new dignity to the study of nature; and he also made the notion of development central, in doing which he showed the way which the biological sciences were, especially after Darwin, to follow. Moreover, by seeing in the real world around us—natural, social, intellectual—the work of a larger Reason than yours or mine, in which your reason and mine are rooted, and a work which we must endeavour therefore to *understand* before we set about trying to *improve* it, he helped to reverse the old rationalistic prejudice in favour of considering as rational only that which could be devised by the individual starting afresh, as it were, for himself, as though his mind had no roots in a larger Reason manifested already in the actual structure of reality.

Besides Goethe and Hegel, I will mention one other great man of this period: a poet of our own, William Wordsworth. That sense of the eternal freshness of nature and of the fundamental realities of human life which in his Revolutionary youth made him welcome the dawn of freedom in France:

> 'Joy was it in that Dawn to be alive,
> But to be young was very heaven':

did not die within him after the later course of the Revolution with its excesses of cruelty and bloodshed, and Napoleon's struggle with England had alienated his sympathy. It lived on, but in union with an ever-deepening sense of the sanctity and permanence of the habitual and the traditional, of those things whereof we can say, as he says himself of Burns:

> 'Deep in the general heart of man
> Their power abides.'

He was thus a true representative of the period of which I have chosen him as a typical figure: and not less so in his profound consciousness of a '*life* which rolls through all things'—a consciousness which sets him far apart from the Rationalism whose God, where it acknowledged one, was thought of as outside the world which he had made and then left, as it were, to itself, except it were perhaps for occasional miraculous interferences;

and it brings him near to such a thought of the whole of Nature, inanimate as well as animate, explicable throughout on the principles of organic growth, as found just after his time a grandiose if, in detail, an unsatisfactory expression in the so-called Synthetic Philosophy of Herbert Spencer; or, as with more eloquence and sympathy if not with equal vastness of design, and with a more penetrating understanding of the problems involved, has been suggested in our own days under the name of Creative Evolution by M. Bergson.

Of the three figures which I have taken as representative of the movement, the chief *motif* of which the Oxford Movement echoes, so to say, in Anglican theology, the third and last has of course a historical connexion with the High Church movement in the Church of England through his personal interest in it in its earlier, his later, days, and through the part played in it, with his approval and sympathy, by his distinguished nephew Christopher, afterwards Bishop of Lincoln. My own father, who as an undergraduate at Cambridge was secretary and a moving spirit of the Cambridge Camden Society, which sought to give practical effect to the interest excited by the Tractarians in the outward form and setting of worship, remembered how the great poet, when on a visit to his brother the Master of Trinity, allowed the young enthusiasts to show him the Round Church restored under their auspices to what they at any rate supposed to be a condition more in keeping with its original purpose and with the spirit of its founders.

The High Church movement reflected in several ways the greater movement of European thought of which I took Goethe, Hegel, Wordsworth as typical figures. It reflected it in its interest in the historical continuity of the present with the past which the Revolution had sought to interrupt; in its idealization, both in Church and State, of the principle of authority which the Revolution had defied: and, in its later rather than in its earlier stages, in its stress on the conception of organic growth or development. This last feature was, as I say, later than the others in making its appearance. If one had to suggest the most obvious difference between the theology of the earlier Tractarians and that of the contributors to *Lux Mundi* and their followers, one would, I think, find it in the contrast between the tendency of the former to regard the Church of the present as

the legal legatee of the authority of Christ and His apostles and of the latter to present it rather as the form which, by a regular process of development, the organism into which the divine life had by the Incarnation been infused has now come to wear. No doubt the contributors to *Lux Mundi* belonged to a generation which had been profoundly affected by the impulse given to an evolutionary view of things by the discoveries and hypotheses of Darwin. But, as has often been observed, the idea of development had before the appearance of the *Origin of Species*, and apparently without any influence exerted by German philosophy, which had already, as I mentioned when speaking of Hegel, begun to lay stress upon it, been introduced into Anglican theology by the famous *Essay on Development*, the appearance of which marked the passage of Newman from the Anglican to the Roman communion. It is not the only, though it is the most conspicuous instance, in which in the course of his life the original genius of the great Tractarian anticipated in forms—sometimes strange forms—adapted to the circumstances of his own inner life at the time, thoughts which, when suggested in connexions of more general interest, were to become current in much wider circles.

In respect of the idea of Development there cannot, I think, be any doubt that Newman's use of it in his *Essay* assisted to facilitate the introduction of it into the theology both of the Anglican Church and of the Church his submission to which he had defended by his view of its variations from primitive Christianity as legitimate developments of what must have been externally so different. But the introduction of the conception of Development into theology must in any case have taken place, when it had once become the ruling idea of the age in all departments of thought.

When speaking of Evangelicalism, I called attention to the value which it attached to feeling, as evidence that we were dealing with a personal experience at first hand and not with something merely inferential or traditional; and to its individualism, which was yet no selfish egoism, but rather the inspiration of a love of individual souls and hence the source of more than one great movement of practical philanthropy. This individualism, however, unquestionably tended, as we saw, to an unhistorical outlook, and to the limiting of religious sym-

pathy to a set distinguished by the use of certain phrases and modes of piety rather than to the widening of it by the recognition that, through participation in the same historic process and in a common life transcending the individual and nourished by social sacraments, it was possible to enjoy a genuine union with ages and communities using different phrases and modes of piety from our own.

We may now ask how the Tractarian or High Church school in the Church of England stood with respect to these features of the movement against which it represents a reaction. Nothing is more distinctive of it than its dislike, even its horror, of emotionalism. The American essayist Oliver Wendell Holmes has justly pointed, as typical of its whole attitude, to some of the most haunting verses in *The Christian Year*:

> 'God only and good angels look
> Behind the blissful screen,
> As when triumphant o'er his foes
> The Son of God at midnight rose
> By all but heaven unseen.'

An austere reticence about oneself, a distrust of sentiment, a delicate reverence in speaking or even in thinking of holy things, are pre-eminently characteristic of Tractarian piety. And with this goes a revulsion from preoccupation with one's own feelings, even one's own experience, from what the philosophers call subjectivity, to a reliance upon what is regarded as objective, as independent of our moods and views and theories, upon historical facts, upon an authoritative ministry, upon sacraments instituted to convey by outward and visible signs a grace which is not communicated to the signs by our faith, though it may be hindered in its operation upon us by our want of it. Many of the older generation of High Churchmen shrank from the use of the word 'conversion' to describe an episode in the life of a baptized person who had never fallen away into a course of evil living and neglect of religion. When so used it was associated in their minds with what seemed to them a disparagement of baptism and confirmation, and an elevation of a merely emotional crisis to the place in the Christian life which properly belonged to a divinely instituted ordinance. The High Churchmen of to-day are not afraid to recognize facts and to use language of which their predecessors fought shy; and the experience which the Evangelicals called 'conversion' is now studied

by psychologists whose interest in it is not religious at all. But some of us can remember Tractarian households in which it could not be mentioned without explanation and apology for the supposed implications of the phrase.

The drama of the inner life on which the attention of the Evangelicals was concentrated was described by them in language which, so far as it was Scriptural, was derived from St. Paul's Epistles; and it was what they understood (rightly or no) St. Paul to have meant by 'his Gospel' that was to them the good news of salvation, from their insistence on which their party-designation was derived. By reaction from this the Tractarians, as Dean Church in his book on *The Oxford Movement* pointed out, laid a special emphasis upon the Gospels and the record therein contained of the Saviour's earthly life, which they thought the Evangelicals had allowed themselves to subordinate unduly in their teaching and their devotion to the theological exposition in the Epistles of the scheme of salvation through His death. This special emphasis on the Gospels was in keeping with a general emphasis on the historical rather than on the emotional element in Christian doctrine which betrays the kinship of Tractarianism with which I have called (following the editors of the *Cambridge Modern History*) the Restoration period of European history.

The stress laid by the Tractarians on the idea of the Church was of course very closely connected with this emphasis on the historical element in Christianity by which they were at once distinguished from the Evangelicals and linked with the contemporary movement of European thought. It is to be remembered that most of, if not all, the other ecclesiastical movements which originated about the same time as the Oxford movement shared with it this feature of emphasis on the idea of the Church as an independent spiritual society, no mere department of the State, and the appointed channel of divine grace to the individual Christian. This is true of Irvingism, which is a little older, of the movement which led to the Disruption of the Scottish Church a little later, and also of the almost exactly contemporary movement in the Danish Church associated with the name of Grundtvig. Even in the Church of England Tractarianism did not stand alone in its stress upon Churchmanship. Newman himself in the *Apologia* admits that

he learned his belief in the substantive existence of the Church as an independent corporation and his anti-Erastianism from Whately, who certainly had no other point of agreement with Tractarianism. Whately was a luminary of what has been called the old Oriel school, as distinguished from the new, which was Tractarian. This was called Noetic, as though one should say Intellectualist, and its affinities were much more with the later Broad or Liberal party in the Church of England than with that which is designated by the epithet 'High.'

A greater man than any of those lately mentioned, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, was also much concerned with the conception of the Church. Carlyle, in his *Life of Sterling*, indeed fathers upon him what he calls the 'spectral Puseyisms, monstrous illusory Hybrids and ecclesiastical Chimeras which now roam the earth in a very lamentable manner.' But perhaps Coleridge was rather the godfather than the begetter of the High Church school; indeed he died before the Oxford movement had well begun. No doubt, like his friend Wordsworth, he would have been in sympathy with it so far as it was expressive of the Platonism which had drawn him from his early Unitarianism into deliberate adhesion to the Church of England; and so far as it coincided with the general bent of his mind, typical therein of the temper of this period of reconstruction and restoration after the great Revolution, towards veneration for traditional sanctities. It is to be observed that he, like Wordsworth, had a nephew in the movement, the friend and biographer of John Keble. But his influence was probably more direct upon the parallel movement represented by Frederick Denison Maurice, who, under the influence of Coleridge, passed—like Coleridge himself—from the Unitarianism in which he had been brought up to historical Christianity as taught in the Church of England, and by the romantic novelist and Christian Socialist Charles Kingsley. With these may here perhaps be named a man of different antecedents, and not intimately connected with them by close personal or party ties, a man of perhaps more original religious genius than any of those except Newman that I have already mentioned: I mean the great preacher Frederick Robertson. Beginning as an Evangelical, he came to stand apart from both the Evangelical and Tractarian schools. Though these three men did not in any strict

sense belong to one school, and were united, Maurice and Kingsley by common political sympathies, and all three by a certain liberality of mind and temper which made it hard for them to breathe freely either in the Evangelical or in the Tractarian atmosphere, rather than by any particular doctrinal programme of their own; yet the theology of them all, while neither Evangelical nor Tractarian, was, no less than were the theologies so described, the expression of a deep personal religious experience, which inclined them far more to the assertion of the substantial truth of historical Christianity than to negative criticism of its formularies.

I shall come later to speak of the Broad Church school more at length: but at present I only wish to point out that the general tendencies of European thought which were echoed in Anglican theology by the Oxford movement are also represented in this sphere by a parallel movement which could trace its descent to Coleridge, who was the principal channel through which the influence of the great philosophical movement in Germany that began with Kant affected the higher thought of England during the first years of the nineteenth century. This movement, though never organized as a party and so remaining without such a dramatic history as the Oxford movement can boast, has profoundly affected later developments of thought in the Church of England, even within the High Church and Evangelical schools themselves. For in the former the Christian Socialism which was inaugurated by Maurice and Kingsley has found a congenial home, while a theologian who was more truly the successor of Maurice than of any other divine of the preceding generation, Bishop Westcott, has exercised an influence upon both schools which did not leave either of them where it was before.

There are, however, two other features of the Oxford movement upon which I would say a few words before I go on to speak of the Liberal or Broad Church movement in Anglican theology; both of which illustrate its character as echoing the general tendencies of the period which I have called that of the Restoration. Those are its relation to the Roman Catholic Church and its encouragement of learning and thought. There is a close connexion between the two. The enemies of the Oxford movement have often seen in it little or nothing but an

approximation to Roman Catholicism, into which when honest and consistent it was bound to be absorbed; and the submission to the Roman See of the greatest of its leaders, as well as of many others of lesser, though considerable, note, seemed to give colour to this estimate of its character. It would, however, be a juster account of the matter to see in it, as I have already suggested that we may, the representative of the interest, characteristic of the period during which it arose, in historical continuity, whether in Christianity or elsewhere. This was bound to place it in regard to the communion which represents the main stock of Western Christianity in an attitude of respect and sympathy very different to that of the Evangelicals who had tended to think of Church history as the record of a corruption of its New Testament purity from which the Reformation marked a partial recovery; and of the Roman See as the centre of a grand apostacy, prefigured by the description of the harlot in the Apocalypse and by the Pauline prophecies of the man of sin. But when in opposition to Evangelicalism it 'disinterred' (to quote Mark Pattison again) 'the remains of Christian antiquity,' it encouraged a serious study of these which was bound to show that neither the conventional Roman nor the conventional Protestant picture of the course of ecclesiastical history was a true representation of the facts, and to reinforce the traditional position of the Church of England as taking a middle course between the two, wherein it could go forward without either discarding its Catholic heritage or, by submission to the claims of Rome to be the sole depository of the infallible guidance promised to the Church, endorsing all additions and substractions from that heritage which have from time to time been made by Papal authority. The Tractarian movement, representing as it did the reaction against the sentimentalism represented in Anglican theology by the Evangelicals, stood from the first on the side of learning, and for the full use of art and knowledge in the service of faith. It has often been observed that, of the great Christian dogmas, Evangelicalism laid stress especially on the Atonement, Tractarianism on the Incarnation. It is easy to see that it is the latter emphasis rather than the former that tends to the encouragement of all the higher human activities as capable of sanctification through the taking of our manhood into God.

# SOME REFLECTIONS ON ENGLISH POETRY AND THE WAR

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## III.

What was the real attitude to the war of those poets who ought in it? Among Wilfred Owen's papers was found this remarkable preface to his poems—in an unfinished condition:

> 'This book is not about heroes. English poetry is not yet fit to speak of them. Nor is it about deeds, or lands, nor anything about glory, honour, dominion and power,
>
> except War.
>
> Above all, this book is not concerned with Poetry.
> The subject of it is War, and the pity of War.
> The Poetry is in the pity.
> Yet these elegies are not to this generation,
> This is in no sense consolatory.
>
> They may be to the next.
> All the poet can do to-day is to warn.
> That is why the true Poets must be truthful.
> If I thought the letter of this book would last,
>
> I might have used proper names; but if the spirit of it survives Prussia my ambition and those names will be content; for they will have achieved themselves fresher fields than Flanders.'

Their poetry can only be understood if we understand how they regarded the War. In the succeeding study of their characteristics no attempt is made to treat the poets individually. The limitations of this method, both in regard to the individuality of the poets and of the nature of aesthetic, must be borne in mind.

The horror of the war is first and always present in their minds. 'The hell where youth and laughter go' is but one expression in many. It is to most a nightmare from which they hope to awaken, a dream they hope to forget. Mr. Gibson in *Back* has put into verse what many have felt:

> 'They ask me where I've been
> And what I've done and seen
> And what can I reply
> Who know it wasn't I?
> But someone just like me
> Who went across the sea
> And with my head and hands
> Killed men in foreign lands.
> Though I must bear the blame
> Because he bore my name.'

Those at home, they realise, only partly understand :

> ' You love us when we are heroes home on leave
> Or wounded in a mentionable place;
> . . . . . .
> You can't believe that British troops retire
> When hell's last horror breaks them and they run,
> Trampling the terrible corpses—blind with blood—'

The women may be forgiven; but with the horror goes a hatred of Press and Church and Staff and all ' kind,' complacent folk and cant phrases. Primarily is this true of the poetry of Mr Sassoon. Most of his poems seem to derive their unity from a mixed sentiment of pity and savage despair, expressing itself in tragic irony. Sometimes he seems unfair, as in *Base Details*, but the moral invective with which *Suicide in the Trenches* ends is desperately sincere. Mr. Squire especially distrusted the religious phraseology of the nations. He wrote this, *The Dilemma* :

> ' God heard the embattled nations sing and shout
> " Gott strafe England ! " and " God save the King ! "
> God this, God that, and God the other thing,
> " Good God," said God, " I've got my work cut out." '

But above all broods the Spirit of Pity. It is a spirit akin to that in Hardy's *Dynasts*. Owen has perhaps immortalized it in one poem of singular beauty, *The Anthem for Doomed Youth.*

> ' What passing bells for them that die as cattle?
> Only the monstrous anger of the guns,
> Only the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle
> Can patter out their hasty orisons.
> No mockeries for them; no prayers nor bells,
> Nor any voice of mourning save the choirs,—
> The shrill demented choirs of wailing shells;
> And bugles calling for them from sad shires.
>
> ' What candles may be held to speed them all?
> Not in the hands of boys, but in their eyes
> Shall shine the holy glimmer of good-byes.
> The pallor of girls' brows shall be their pall;
> Their flowers the tenderness of patient minds,
> And each slow dusk a drawing down of blinds.'

It would not be difficult to quote a phrase or a poem in nearly every writer which reveals some measure of this same Spirit of Pity. It is often linked in the poet's thought with the pity of the Christ. Pity is the profoundest and sincerest emotion of the poetry of our age. Other ages may have found higher

or may be lower predominant expressions of the human spirit. But we do not hope nor enjoy, above all we do not love, as we pity. For this age 'our sweetest songs are those of saddest thought.'

Another characteristic of our poets is pessimism. Some object to calling Hardy a pessimist because, they argue, he is too conscious of, and delighting in, the beautiful. But if the word pessimism is not used in too sweeping a sense, then it may be allowed. For there is a pessimism which fears that this world can never be what the best have hoped and worked that it might become; that in the long run it is a tragedy, though it be beautiful; perhaps more beautiful because a tragedy. A German poem of the War contrasts those who die for the sake of their country and their ideals, with those who die knowing that war can only breed war, and the evils of to-day produce more evil on the morrow: to these last death comes with 'the sharpest sting.' Owen, in despair, cries:

> 'Oh what made fatuous sunbeams toil
> To break earth's sleep at all?'

Giving a strange reading into the incident of Christ writing in the dust, Wilson asks:

> 'Did He (even He) grope in a sudden dark
> And scrawl in the dust a question mark?'

All will know Hardy's beautiful poem, *Men who march away*, in which this doubt conflicts with the hopefulness of August, 1914. Most write in this strain sometimes, but Brett Young stands out as hopeful in *Song of the Dark Ages*:

> 'Poor savages who wrought in stone,
> Poor savages who fought in France.'

He may be critical, but despite Dean Inge he still has a Victorian faith in Progress.

But there are also sources of pleasure, if not of joy. Modern English poetry has been marked by a peculiar love of Nature. Mr. Lynd has said that they love Nature not as aesthetes, but as naturalists, not so much in the spirit of Wordsworth as of John Clare. There is an intimate friendliness with Nature, a very kinship, allied to the spirit of some primitive religion, refined and purified. All know Flecker's *Brumana*. And in the war poetry this sheer delight, that Nature gives, is for ever

breaking through the pathos of war. *Magpies in Picardy* provides the title for Wilson's poems. It is found alike in the heroic and the realistic poets. Very wonderful is it when this love of nature and the war mingle in one poem as they do in Sorley's *All the Hills and Vales*, which has caught a rare spirit.

'Earth that never doubts or fears,
Earth that knows of death, not tears,
Earth that bore with joyful ease
Hemlock for Socrates,
Earth that blossomed and was glad
'Neath the cross that Christ had,
Shall rejoice and blossom, too,
When the bullet reaches you.
Wherefore, men marching
On the road to death, sing!
Pour your gladness on earth's head,
So be merry, so be dead.'

It may be thought that the spirit of the men with whom they lived would be a source of poetic inspiration, as it cheered and comforted so many. But it will have been noticed that the pity was largely an impersonal pity and not linked with particular persons. Hodgson and Mr. Nichols are certainly inspired with affection and admiration for the men they led. And Mr. Sassoon in *Triumph*, so different from his other poems, writes:

'With death in the terrible flickering gloom of the fight
I was cruel and fierce with despair; I was naked and bound;
I was stricken; and beauty returned through the shambles of night,
In the faces of men she returned; their triumph I found.'

Yet the general impression is that these are the exceptions, and that the spirit of the men was not a subject that the poets cared much to write about.

Mr. A. E. Housman has written the greatest epigram on the army. In a striking way it seems to combine many of the characteristics already noted. He called it *An Epitaph on an Army of Mercenaries*:

'These in the day when heaven was falling,
The hour when earth's foundations fled,
Followed their mercenary calling
And took their wages and are dead.
Their shoulders held the sky suspended,
They stood, and earth's foundations stay;
What God abandoned these defended
And saved the sum of things for pay.'

Two very suggestive contrasts can be drawn with this realistic poetry. Everyone knows Lovelace's *To Lucasta, going*

*to the Wars*. And when we recall the whole poem and not merely the concluding lines, we appreciate not so much their moral as their charm. His 'conceit' that sees in war 'a new mistress' is both original and whimsical. To-day Mr. Robert Graves, writing under the same title with the addition, *For the fourth time*, writes in the last verse:

> 'Don't plume yourself he fights for you;
> It is not courage, love or hate
> That lets us do the things we do;
> It's pride that makes the heart so great;
> It is not anger, no, nor fear—
> Lucasta, he's a Fusilier,
> And his pride keeps him here.'

In Lovelace there is a deep content, so inimitably expressed in *To Althea*. The song of love sounds peacefully victorious over all human ills. Was he sincere or was it that he only wrote what the poetic convention of his day demanded? There is no parallel in the war poets of to-day. Fighting has become too terrible for anyone to be whimsical about it; only a rough humour is possible. This fact and the revolt from any convention, and especially from the classical tradition that there are themes unsuited to poetry, have been fundamental causes in the poetic phenomena of the war.

The second contrast is between our poet's attitude, above all to the soldiers, and the attitude in the writings of Donald Hankey or in that remarkable book, *Aunt Sarah and the War*. Hankey before the war was a dreamer and a thinker; the war brought him into contact with the realities of his fellows in a way that years in a London slum had never done. And out of this contact came the most radiant optimism: 'Men live,' he wrote, 'for eating and drinking, they die for honour and friendship. In the hour of danger all good men are believers, they choose the spiritual and reject the material. The death of a hero convinces all of eternal life; they are unable to call it a tragedy.' And there follows in a *Book of Wisdom*, from which I quote, one of the most courageous, radiant, and poetic passages which the war ever inspired. And yet to Owen, when he asks the Earth whether there is life beyond, it answers:

> 'My fiery heart sinks aching. It is death.
> Mine ancient scars shall not be glorified
> Nor my titanic tears the seas be dried.'

He had not seen the death of a hero as Hankey had seen it. It is not enough to contrast the optimism of Hankey and the pessimism of our war poets. The contrast suggests another line of thought and criticism.

## IV.

Surely poetically we were as unprepared for war as we could be. For what is mainly characteristic of modern poetry is that movement which we call realism.[1] It is marked by a certain loosening of form, by a distrust of allegory, and a sparing use of imagery and symbolism. But what is its real significance? In the first place it is non-moral. It makes no moral judgments because it has no moral values, on which to base any definite thought or feeling on moral relations. Further, it has no philosophy, which helps it to relate the diversities of human experience. It has no beliefs. Brooke sought 'certainty.' It is content with the description of nature, feeling, and incident, and that, too, on a small scale, while it seeks to get straight from life the emotion or thought it wishes to express. It makes no effort to relate these experiences to the whole. Its unemotional ideal is in Mr. Gibson's *Bayonet*. Its God is worshipped in Ensor's *An Ode to Reality*:

> 'Plough with the iron fact
> And earn at least some harvest that is bread.'

But the facts are isolated facts. That is the meaning of realism and its failure.

Some may think that the characteristics of the war poetry are much more easily explained than by these sweeping generalisations. In war-time, it may be argued, men had no time to think, and the poetry admittedly shows signs of haste; and further, the writers were young, and of course the war made us all a little neurotic. There is indeed truth in this, and it accounts for a part, *e.g.* Mr. Gurney's *Song of Pain and Beauty*. But the neurosis argument begs the question, for behind it lies another; is the 'neurosis' caused by the experience of the war or by the nature of the minds brought to it? As for thinking, our patriotic poets found phrases which have at least the appear-

[1] Since this paper was written, the writer has read Mr. A. M. Clarke's *The Realistic Revolt in Modern Poetry*. The reader is referred to it for a very much more adequate expression of what the present writer has tried to convey in part of this concluding argument.

ance of reflection. Yet there remains this vivid contrast between the poets fighting and the poets at home. A few try to bridge this gulf, but none really succeed. Aud further, there has been a considerable movement in English poetry since the beginning of the century whose characteristics are *mutatis mutandis* those of the war-poets. The war-poets were not greatly concerned with their fellow-men—certainly not in the way Hankey was. They were nearly impersonal in their attitude. And it is remarkable, as Mr. Lynd has said, that there is little about the love of man and woman in modern verse. '*Awake, my heart, to be loved, awake, awake!*' occupies a lone height. It is this tendency, I think, against which Mr. Clutton Brock protests, when he insists on the personal element in beauty, and grows happy at the thought of a nymph.

Modern poets appear to love nature more than they love men, to be content with description rather than explanation, to be more interested in the processes of the mind than in the ends towards which the processes move. In fact, they distrust ends, purpose, and earnestness. Think of Brook's *Great Lover* or Sorley's *The Other Wise Man.* Or even better this opening verse of Sorley's *Song of the Ungirt Runners*:

> 'We swing ungirded hips,
> And lightened are our eyes,
> The rain is on our lips,
> We do not run for prize.
> We know not whom we trust
> Nor witherward we fare,
> But we run because we must
> Through the great wide air.'

Sorley means every word in this verse. It has *la joie de vivre.* Its gospel is spontaneity. (Forgive if sometimes the gospel is turned into a dogma; others have done that.) The *vers libre*, characteristic of Whitman, has since his time been the formal—or formless—expression of this attitude. The revolt has been distinctly self-conscious and at times bitter. Owens, in the *Parable of the Old Men and the Young*, throws on the older generation the responsibility for the death of the younger in War. It is more nobly expressed in many of Sorley's poems, and especially in *What you Will*:

> 'I only know
> That when I have a son of mine,
> He shan't be made to droop and pine,

Bound down and forced by rule and rod
To serve a God who is no God,
But I'll put custom on the shelf,
And make him find his God himself.'

To those accustomed to think in the language of Christianity, something of the spirit of these men may be made clear by a quotation from a poem written in Gallipoli. It first appeared in the *Australian Intercollegian*, and was quoted in the *Spectator*. It is remarkable among war poetry, even, for its passionate strength.

'Jesus, whose lot with us was cast,
Who saw it out from first to last;
Patient and fearless, tender, true,
Carpenter, vagabond, felon, Jew—
Whose humorous eyes took in each phase
Of full rich life this world displays;
Yet ever more kept full in view
The far off goal it leads us to;
Who, as your hour neared, did not fail—
The World's fate trembling in the scale—
With your half-hearted band to dine,
And speak across the bread and wine;
Then went out firm to face the end,
Alone, without a single friend;
Who felt as your last words confessed—
Wrung from a proud unflinching breast
By hours of dull ignoble pain,
Your whole life's fight was fought in vain;
Would I could win and keep and feel
That heart of love, that soul of steel.
I would not to Thy bosom fly
To shirk off till the storms go by;
If you are like the man you were
You'd turn in scorn from such a prayer,
Unless from some poor workhouse crone,
Too toilworn to do aught but moan.'

It is interesting to recall that Wordsworth led a revolt against the conventions of the eighteenth century. Yet he wrote an *Ode to Duty*, which is a word that has dropped out of the vocabulary of modern poetry. Duty was not to him the harsh, unlovely thing it is to our moderns; it was rather 'a light to guide,' and such a view of it came after 'being to myself a guide.' If he valued denial and restraint, it was 'no farther than they breed a second will more wise.' In his *Happy Warrior*, he at least attempted to portray the ideal of the active life. If at times his sentiment becomes sentimentality and his ideals of duty harden into unsympathetic moralities, it is at least the

fault of his virtues. If modern poets are free from his faults, it is because they have not aspired to his virtues. Priding themselves on their closeness to fact, often they are actually idealists, dreaming that they live in a world:

> 'Where love is an unerring light
> And joy its own security.'

and forgetting what Aristotle called 'the inferiority of human nature.'

But however unsatisfactory this position, it is not to be accounted for, as some writers would seem to presume, by the sudden degeneracy of the race. There is nothing morally degenerate, still less irreligious, in the last two war-poems quoted; rather the contrary. They may be theologically unconventional. Many times in the war-poems moral passion bursts through; but it is not directed against the Germans, but against those who could understand and will not, and who keep off facts by words. If there is dislike of denial and restraint—those unhappy negatives which have been identified with morality and, most paradoxically of all, with Christianity—it is because (1) they have recognised that morality is not a law, but a positive free spirit, and (2) they cannot get the diversity of human experience into sufficient mutual relation for them to understand what is of value and what is not. The 'how' of this fact lies in the nineteenth century. It is well known. In the struggle between the scientific and Christian thinkers, the scientific won. That is to say, the younger generation of that day followed after 'the new prophecy.' The conventional religious sanctions and ideas and beliefs came to be regarded as invalidated. Meanwhile, the German idealism of the early part of the century gave place to the *Realpolitik* of Bismarck, and Romanticism was deserted in favour of science. *Realpolitik* is opportunist, and science means detailed research. The adventurous and creative spirit in man was fully occupied in building material monuments in the name of utility, or bearing 'the white man's burden' in the name of idealism. The field of thought became the heritage of the destructive thinkers. The result was chaos in the realm of ideas. The crowning blow was added by psychology, with its tendency to introspection, its cynicism in regard to human motives, and its scepticism of the moral conscience.

The result of this can be seen, on the one hand, in the absence of a certain class of poetry and in such verses as these. Mr. Flower's poem, *La Vie Cerebrale*, ends :

> 'And one day weary grown
> Of all my brain has wrought;
> I shall destroy my thought
> And I and all be gone.'

And Mr. De La Mare, who is no realist, seems to despair in beautiful dreams :

> 'No, no. Nor earth, nor air, nor fire, nor deep
> Could lull more mortal longingness asleep.
> Somewhere there Nothing is : and there lost Man
> Shall win what changeless vague of peace he can.'

But, on the other hand, there is this pre-war sonnet of Mr. Dearmer's :

> 'Let others bow before a God unknown
> Enshrined in words they dimly understand,
> Let every man make Paradise his own—
> My Goddess breathes and leads me by the hand
> O Hush! I dare not speak of it alone,
> 'Tis all too wonderful and strangely planned.'

And further, Sorley's *Song of the Ungirt Runners* is but a type of many poems written before the war. If the deeper aspects of human life were hidden in the smoke of philosophic dispute, the poetic spirit sought compensation elsewhere. If the poet did not find rest, he found the joy of action. If he did not find a God in love and thought, he found a God in nature and its beauty. And God is a Spirit. This too he knew.

But when it came to War, what happened? There were the heroics of the early days, and the patriotic songs of the home land, and later the contrasts in poetry of Mr. Sorley and Mr Dearmer, the despairing irony of Mr. Sassoon, the cool realism of Gibson, the Nature-love of Wilson, the pity of Owens and many others. Our poets have gone to the War, artists as they were. They have seen the 'unreturning army that was youth' and they loved and valued youth; they have seen the bodies whose form gave them joy, left in a 'red ruin of blood and gut and bone'; they have seen the human mind which was, especially to them, wonderful in its mechanism, its fine appreciations and its delicate emotions, torn by pain and sent mad by horror; they have seen the nature they loved destroyed around them by shell and by fire. They have doubted whether love or beauty

could come out of such hate. They have asked whether the universe, which could produce such a conflict, had any meaning. All the joy in the heroic was lost in the nightmare of the horror.

## V.

The War has gone into History and has become a mirror wherein we may see ourselves. Against its lurid background stand out certain characteristics in the outlook of its poets. The explanation of these characteristics, it has been shown, lies in other factors more permanent than the War. The poet usually reflects the mind of his age, and to-day there are many who share his outlook who make no claims to his title. And the modern movement in Poetry can find its congeners in political science, domestic morals, religion, and philosophy. There is arising in these departments a new synthetic movement—a search after a basis on which definite construction can be built. Our war-poets had not got thus far. But to be fair to them they recognised this fact. Owens could recount the pity and the horror, but he refused to attempt anything else, although his *Strange Meeting* is an anticipation. Ensor in *An Ode to Reality* recognises the limitations of Realism.

Modern Poetry cannot be content with simple Realism. It has chosen, according to a writer in the *Times Literary Supplement*, 'the easy path, the path of rapture and immediate contentment, which satisfies for a time and . . . then . . . *ennui*.' It has set up a critical dogma that beauty alone is to be looked for in poetry, and that its recognition requires no understanding of the poet; this is highly disputable; for certainly in so far as poetry is an expression of the human spirit, all knowledge may lead to fuller appreciation. The poet's task cannot be consciously to 'seek out heaven from the surrounding hell,' nor is 'we are poets and shall tell the truth' the true attitude of Poetry. They are not the newspaper reporters of the Kingdom of Heaven. Moreover, the study as well as the battlefield is the laboratory of poets. The purpose of the war, the reason of the war, and the horror of death by gas, have got to be related in a comprehensible manner.[1] Values cannot for ever be based on temporary expediency, and there has got to be recognised the

[1] Mr. Clarke has well said 'Art is a synthesis, not an analysis.'

relation between the immediate gain and the more distant goal. The post-war mind will commence to reflect on that experience of war and will demand a solution of these problems. Neither society nor great poetry can be based upon a series of realistic impressions. And the hypothesis that there is no final answer to these questions is no reason for not trying to understand them. Rather it is a spur. If our poetry, as well as being in some degree beautiful, is also to be great, then our poets must take in the whole realm of human experience. Their Realism must extend from sense-data to the world of ideas and values.

But any future poet of the War will also need, if he is to be equal to this 'immortal theme,' the freedom and clearsightedness, the sincerity and the pity, of which our war poets have so much to give.

## NATURE AND SUPERNATURE

By Emma Marie Caillard.

HUXLEY defined nature as 'the totality of that which is,' but thinkers approaching the subject from a different standpoint subscribe to the definition. For instance, Mr. Edmond Holmes in his little book, *The Secret of the Cross*, observes:

> 'In the root sense of the word—the essential qualities and properties of a thing—the idea of Nature is applicable . . . to the totality of things, to the Universe itself' (p. 15).

On a later page in the same work he tells us that the universe is

> 'an organic whole, just as man and every other living thing is an organic whole in virtue of its own indwelling life. That indwelling life is the creator and sustainer of the universe, its ruler and organizer, its efficient and its final cause.'[1]

In the language of theology God is immanent in the universe.

There is no doubt that some deeply religious minds accept this conclusion as final and sufficient, but to others as profoundly religious it is unsatisfactory because incomplete. They

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 40.

would endorse willingly the conception that the indwelling life of the universe is its creator and sustainer, its efficient and its final cause, but they would not, as the author of the above quoted passage apparently does, regard the universe as synonymous with that which indwells it. At the same time they would not, at any rate the serious thinkers among them, have any use for the word 'supernatural.' They would, indeed, be better pleased with the theological term 'transcendent,' which, in the Christian conception of God, is the necessary complement to His immanence.

According to this idea there is no 'super-nature' in the sense that some ill-defined 'spiritual' universe surrounds and supersedes the natural. There is the natural and there is the Divine, partly—but only partly—expressed in the natural, uniquely and most adequately for us expressed in Christ in Whom we see the natural raised to its highest power, the human filled to its utmost capacity with the Divine, yet not ceasing to be human and natural because the human and natural are, in their measure, also Divine.

Do these remarks imply that we must renounce belief in the existence of beings different from and higher than ourselves, but lower than the Divine? By no means. To suppose that man has a monopoly of those powers which have raised him to the status of a thinking, purposing and voluntary being is a futile and somewhat conceited notion. But such beings if, and in so far as, they exist are not supernatural. They belong to the natural universe; their powers, however far superior to ours, are yet only exercisable within limits, wider but no less real than our own; they are finite as we are. 'Angels, principalities and powers,' our fellows who have passed through the gate of death to the life beyond, these are all natural and living in the natural, though to them it far exceeds our experience of it, as they and their environment more fully express the indwelling God Who is their life and ours, yet neither in them nor in us, nor in any conditions conceivable by us, expresses that life fully and exhaustively.

Christ, it is our conviction, was the natural raised to its highest power: the human filled to its utmost capacity with the Divine, and it was in Him in Whom the immanent God was thus supreme that conscious dependence on the transcendent

God also reached its climax. Throughout His earthly life the realization of its dependence on that which was greater and higher than itself appeared never to be absent. It may therefore be quite truly said that in revealing as He did the reality of the God *within*, He was equally bearing witness to the reality of the God *without*—in the sense that that God was greater than either universal nature or human nature could manifest, 'though not far from every one of us.'

> 'Closer is He than breathing,
> Nearer than hands and feet.'[2]

Truths so comprehensive and so fundamental as this cannot be adequately expressed in words. No form of words can be wholly exempt from possible error and probable misunderstanding. It is for this reason that the construction of Catholic creeds is a matter of extreme difficulty, although of fundamental necessity. This difficulty is painfully illustrated by the history of the various Church Councils in which the creeds were formulated and by the persecution to which those who could not accept the orthodox definitions were subjected. The spirit of persecution is alive to-day, though unable to avail itself of the material methods which were formerly at its disposal. The reason of this survival would seem to be our feeble realization that in the last resort, and notwithstanding the urgent human need of spiritual fellowship, that which a man believes about God is a matter *between himself and the God in Whom he believes*; no third party, no fellow-believer, or society of fellow-believers, has the right to intervene.

It may be said that to carry individualism to such an extent as this in matters of faith is to open the door to all manner of vagaries and eccentricities, and so to destroy any hope of unity. We believe, on the contrary, that true unity can be attained in no other way. Minor, and sometimes even major, differences assist to express that whole of Truth which is able to resolve them all, and by giving to each its true place and proportion, assign to each its true, and no more than its true, value. It must be admitted, however, that the case of the authorized teacher in a Christian community differs from that of the private and silent member. His freedom cannot be so great. Nevertheless, it will

[2] Tennyson, *The Higher Pantheism.*

be well that it should be as large as possible. The practical conclusion to be drawn from the history of theological controversy is that a very wide latitude of interpretation of formal creeds should be allowed, and that the creeds themselves should be so framed as to allow of this latitude without laying those who avail themselves of it open, if they are clergy, to the accusation of insincerity; and if they are laity to the charge of lazy or cynical indifference.

It might, on account of the greater clarity and simplification involved, be some assistance to achieve this end if we were to eliminate the word 'supernatural' from our vocabulary altogether. It might justifiably be replaced by the word Divine, because (1) the Divine is in all nature and in every region of nature, and (2) because the wider inclusiveness which would thus be bestowed on nature would eliminate the necessity for any mediate region between the Divine and the human. 'Angels, principalities and powers,' the discarnate personalities of 'just men made perfect,' all these in so far as they exist fall within the realm of Nature, and consequently all live and move and have their being in the eternal and infinite God Who is their life, but Who is not limited to their life at any one stage of its development. Religion is not founded on the supernatural, as so many people still assert. Its ultimate foundation is the Divine; but to finite perception it is the Divine *and* the natural, the Divine manifested in and through the natural. Nowhere is this more plainly asserted than in Christianity, where the supreme Divine revelation is made in an individual human life. The fact of its individualness is often regarded as its most serious objection, but how to man could it otherwise have been made universal? He has no experience of the abstraction 'man,' he knows only individual men and women, and a Divine Incarnation (of which indeed that in the race is a pre-supposition) could have no meaning for him unless it were also concrete and individual.

Theology has fallen upon evil days; its very name is suspect and discredited, and not wholly without reason; for it is too often bound up with narrow and stereotyped dogma, but there are some of its tenets which cannot thus be confined, which are always ready to burst their bonds, and do burst them as often as the light of that enriched experience, made possible

by a truer interpretation of history and a deeper science, dawns upon an age or an individual prepared to welcome and follow it. Among these conceptions, that of a God at once immanent and transcendent is the most valuable, the most practical, and the most liberating. It is the enemy of superstition; it consecrates nature and man in the widest sense and to the highest destiny, yet finds a place for the feeblest life and the minutest detail in the universe which it exalts. There is no need to fear or decry theology so long as theology expands with expanding knowledge and experience, and so long as we sincerely admit that it can never more than approximate to the truth it endeavours to formulate. If the term 'supernatural' conduces to misleading notions of the relation between ourselves and Supreme Reality, let us by all means do away with it; but we cannot cast aside its underlying idea, that of the transcendent God.

# BOOK NOTICES

## EDWARD LEE HICKS.*

Mr. Fowler has conferred a great benefit on many circles of readers by becoming what he very modestly calls the 'Editor' of the Life and Letters of Dr. Hicks. The part not directly from the author consists of information furnished about certain periods of Dr. Hicks' Life by those to whom they are particularly familiar: especially by Canon Peter Green for the Salford period and Canon Boulter for the Lincoln period. Perhaps in reading the whole chapters by another writer, the fact that they are not from the author's pen should be borne in mind. In general, Mr. Fowler (late Senior English Master at Clifton College) shows all the qualities of a first-rate biographer, in giving considerable space to Hicks' own account of some of the most interesting episodes of his life (such as his reminiscences of Ruskin at Oxford), vivid descriptions of certain events in his career, and well chosen quotations from some of his published works, as well as many suggestive and self revealing utterances in his letters.

The work is certainly one that should be read and appreciated by Modern Churchmen, though the Bishop's standpoint in matters practical and theological is not that generally associated with their objects. In social reforms he was, in theory and practice, intensely interested. He was a very strong promotor of temperance, though not, apparently, a prohibitionist, and keenly desirous of reducing the drink interest in public life. He was whole-heartedly in favour of higher education and wider openings for women—without any depressing *arriere-pensées* as to unforseen consequences. He detested war, but was not in sympathy with

* *The Life and Letters of Edward Lee Hicks, Bishop of Lincoln 1910-1919.* Edited by J. H. Fowler. (Christophers, 1922). Price 10/6.

pacifists, and lived to rejoice in the hope of an efficient League of Nations. He believed that disestablishment must come; but the deduction from that belief was that the Church must justify its existence now, and hope for fairly favourable terms when the catastrophe arrives.

He would probably have rejected the term *Modernist,* because his education, his chief interests apart from necessary conditions, his historical and philosophical affinities were all with the past,—generally a very remote past. But it is this very fact, conjoined with the faith and hope which sustained his life in the present, that gives him prestige above most of our up-to-date teachers. Not only is it true that past times were *never dead* to him, but that he pursued his studies of the past in the spirit and according to the methods of modern science. Especially was this the case with his religion and his view of religious history. He taught in all his work and life how respect for the past based on accurate knowledge is essential to solid progress in the present, whether intellectual, moral, or religious. The surprising question addressed to him, as a Canon of Manchester, by an Oxford Professor of Greek: 'Excuse me, Canon Hicks. Are you by any chance connected with the Hicks of the Greek Inscriptions?' *might* have been answered by saying that but for the Greek Inscriptions Canon Hicks would never have attained his proper sphere in life. This point will come out more clearly if we trace briefly Hicks' career as related by Mr. Fowler.

Edward Lee Hicks was born at Oxford in 1843. His parents were of farming stock, not very successful in life, literary in tastes, and keen in liberal politics. His mother had been a Wesleyan, and his father attended a Wesleyan chapel till sundry controversies led them to give it up for the Church of England. Hicks was sent to a private school and afterwards taken into Magdalen College School, where he played the organ and learned a very creditable amount of Latin and Greek, 'a certain indication,' as his biographer says, 'that it is not necessary for the maintenance of classical studies that boys should learn two classical languages at the preparatory school age.' In 1860, he was (being Prize Medallist) elected to an open scholarship at Brasenose. He took various scholarships and obtained his Double First. During this time he read widely, especially (outside his classical work) Mill and Comte and much good English literature. There are signs that his new philosophical diet hardly accommodated itself to the Evangelical system in which he had been brought up. But he seems to have 'consumed his own smoke.'

In accordance with the reforms of the Royal Commission, Hicks was the first elected lay fellow of Corpus Christi (1886). At this college and others with which hospitality was exchanged, there seems to have been an unusually large number of brilliant men, among them Conington, Dill, Maine (Corpus Professor of Jurisprudence), Creighton, and, above all in influence and charm, Ruskin, of whose characteristics some 'Common Room Reminiscences' by Hicks are given at this stage in the book.

Hicks was ordained deacon in 1870 and priest in 1871. There is disappointingly little to be gathered from any papers or letters as to the presence or absence of any scruples on his part. He seems to have attained early to a spiritual *modus vivendi* among conflicting forces and ideals, but the process is not clear. Curiously little stress was laid on the fact that some years previously he had been incapacitated from active exercise owing to a blow on the feet. He became an adept with his crutch, and used his recreation time in music. Even his wife was imperfectly informed afterwards as to his temporary disabilities. 'It made him very tender-hearted always to those who suffered physical pain. But he scarcely ever spoke

of those days. If a memory was painful, or if he disliked a thing, he would not speak of it. That was an invariable habit of his through life.' There is abundant evidence for this period of his excellence as a tutor and his growing enthusiasm for Greek archæology. His large-mindedness in appreciating thinkers in alien fields appears in his Diary of 1870. 'Nov. 5: Went to the Library for Julian's Epistles to verify a reference, apparently a most interesting collection, which I should like to read through. The man seems so pious and so straightforward' (p. 27).

In 1873, Hicks left Oxford to accept a college living, that at Fenney Compton, in Warwickshire. For thirteen years, he lived as a remote country clergyman, devoting himself whole-heartedly to the religious, intellectual and social needs of his parish, continuing, by the help of occasional visits to London, his classical investigations, which brought him the warm eulogies of such scholars as Waddington and Michaelis. He married a lady (Miss A. M. Trevelyan Smith) who thoroughly understood and appreciated his mind and character; and brought up a young family on principles which allowed the largest measure of self-determination (for daughters as for sons) in an atmosphere of perfect loyalty and affection. He also wrote a life of his friend Walter Bazeley (a presbyterian evangelist), read a good deal of practical theology and of general literature, and interested himself in local architecture and botany.

In 1886, Hicks migrated to a very different position, that of Principal of Hulme Hall, a house of residence for students of Owen's College, Manchester. Here he may have seemed to be swimming against the stream, as the students under his care had for the most part begun their education in a non-academic atmosphere. But he endeavoured to inspire as many as possible with a love of good literature, and to widen and deepen the theological outlook of those whom he instructed in the Greek Testament. He found time for a summer in Berlin where he attended the lectures of Curtius and other famous archæologists. Owen's College recognised his merits and made him Lecturer on Classical Archæology. He found, at first, no encouragement to his efforts for original research, but in humble ways (such as articles in the *National Home Reading Union*) he stimulated, in a wider circle, an educative admiration for antiquity. Meantime, his desire for social reforms on a religious basis was growing upon him, and in 1892, the Crown recognised his merits by appointing him to a canonry at Manchester. This he held together with the living of St. Philip's, Salford.

The Salford period of Hick's life (1892-1910) was one of severe up-hill work—not—one would have imagined, of the kind best accomplished by an eminent and refined scholar. But here his many-sidedness appeared even more evident than before. He started a club for lads and stimulated an excellent one for girls; instituted mission work on Church Army lines; lectured on many subjects to different types of hearers, and especially took up the task of inspiring ordinands to interest themselves in biblical study.

In 1906, the offer was made to him of the Deanery of Manchester, but he declined, on account of two conditions; one relating to a financial arrangement which he regarded as unconstitutional; the other involving a proposed change in the 'unduly ritualistic ceremonial' of the Cathedral services, respecting which complaints had been made to the Prime Minister. In his reply to this demand, Hicks declared that 'nothing but strife and confusion could come from any attempt' of the kind. 'I am a tolerant but real Churchman, in close touch with Churchmen of all complexions and accustomed to work in hearty co-operation with all kinds of Nonconformists; and I feel strongly that it is neither wise nor reverent to make arbitrary changes in the long established usages of a Church, especially of

a Church so much beloved and so well frequented as this cathedral. Its ritual (which is quite moderate) has remained practically unaltered for many years. I am not aware of any ritual usage connected with the Cathedral which could be accounted illegal.' In the end, revolution was averted, but Hicks was not made Dean.

A more congenial task than anything connected with ceremonial controversy was that of carrying out archæological investigations in Manchester, and stimulating the popular as well as the more learned interest in the Roman Period in Britain. It is interesting to see in his letters the combination of social reforming ideas with the investigation of archæological problems. The link was in his intense human interests—which embraced present and past alike. His two visits to Greece (in 1895 and 1907) were not professionally historical or archæological, but valuable and delightful to him as giving him vivid impressions of places with which his life-long studies had made him familiar.

In 1910, Hicks received from Mr. Asquith a letter proposing that he should be nominated to the Bishopric of Lincoln. The terms in which the proposal was made and accepted are honourable to both. 'The diocese of Lincoln,' said Mr. Asquith, 'with its great historic traditions, containing a large Nonconformist population, presents difficult problems, which I rely on your broadminded conception of the true functions of a chief pastor of the Church under democratic conditions worthily and adequately to face.' In his reply, the future bishop said, after acknowledging the greatness of the task proposed; 'Perhaps a long and varied experience of Church work and life, and a deepening sympathy with Christians of every name may embolden me to hope, by God's help, to do something more in a position of influence to promote religious peace as well as to further social progress and individual piety.'

These three desiderata were kept conspicuously in view during the last years of his life. His zeal for temperance had somewhat earlier brought him into close connection with Sir Wilfrid Lawson and through him with the United Kingdom Alliance. The administrative work of the diocese as well as the social duties concerned with Lincoln made great demands on his active powers. He retained—perhaps increased—his love of Greek learning. In 1912, being President of the Classical Association, he delivered a learned and thoughtful and at the same time a heart-warming address to the Association at their Conference in King's College, London. Tracing in a masterly survey the history of Hellenism from Alexander the Great down to the present time, he made his audience—mainly of classical teachers—feel thankful for their task of perpetuating its invigorating influence. One realized that there was no hard-and-fast line to be drawn between ancient and modern—even between Christian and Pagan. To him all history was a continuous and fructifying stream, of which the most refreshing powers were due to the influence of Greek ideas. In a long vacation address to Clergy at Oxford some years before, he had developed a part of this theme: 'St. Paul and Hellenism.' In this paper he dwells also on the thoroughly Hellenic spirit of the early Greek Fathers.

Some of his later writings show the gratification he felt in the Lincoln memories of St. Hugh and the early Greek scholar Grosteste. But the work of the diocese taxed his declining strength. He naturally felt intensely the strain of the War. He regretted the sufferings of the Conscientious Objectors, though he regarded their position as untenable. One of his sons was killed and another badly wounded. His last episcopal task was to confirm a number of V.A.D.s and soldiers in his Chapel. He felt obliged to resign his office, and died a few days later (August 13th, 1919).

By his express directions his body was cremated. The ashes were deposited near the remains of Grosteste in Lincoln Cathedral.

The general impression left by Mr. Fowler's record is that of a homogeneous life, in which many objects—all of them worthy and admirable—are pursued together in a spirit of wisdom, kindliness, charity, and deep piety. It may be specially recommended to Modern Churchmen, because Dr. Hicks, as was said at the outset, with all his love and reverence for the past, was entirely up-to-date in his methods both of study and of reform. His attitude towards Biblical study was as far as possible removed from any kind of dogmatic assertion. He believed—and would teach children to believe—in a gradual revelation involving changed conceptions of history and of morals. The New Testament in its different strands of documentary sources he would subject to careful and discriminate study. But his great contribution to religious thought would seem to lie in his sympathetic readiness to trace historical continuity rather than to insist on authority. History to him, in his Greek studies, had implied not only the careful reading of literary works but the scientific discrimination of all possible sources of knowledge, along with sympathetic appreciation of all high thought and work.

One feels, after reading a book like this, a little apprehensive as to the future of the Church of England. It is becoming very widely assumed that in the present dearth of educated candidates for holy orders, a very small amount of literary culture should be required,—that a Little-go or Responsions knowledge of Greek is as much as should be expected from the average parish priest; that some knowledge of the history of his own country is enough without any interest in Greece or Rome; that a hunger and thirst after knowledge is rather a snare than an advantage in the clerical office. Even those who would not take this line would sometimes say that a good modern education is more to be desired that that of a man like Hicks, who, in leisure moments, took out of his pocket copies of Greek inscriptions to decipher, or who, when unable to sleep at night, employed himself in Latinizing familiar English hymns. Perhaps Bishop Hicks, does after all, belong to a past generation. But we would fain hope that his type will not, for a time at least, entirely pass away. ALICE GARDNER.

## ASPECTS OF CHRISTIANITY.*

Miss Evelyn Underhill, in this latest endeavour to 'bring the classical experience of the spiritual life into line with the conclusions of modern psychological interpretation of religion,' should not be left only to those whose primary interest is psychological and not religious. Some psychologists, in their enthusiasm for a new and absorbing study, are inclined to confuse psychological interpretations of religious experience with religion itself, or at least to suppose that their interpretations are exhaustive and complete. It used to be supposed that you could interpret life in terms of chemistry, physics and biology, and it is now widely supposed that you can interpret religion in terms of psychology. But such an interpretation is in fact partial and incomplete; it 'will only be true within its own system of reference,' as Miss Underhill observes.

Thus the author of this book, although a psychologist, is in no danger of evacuating religion of all spiritual significance by representing it as a form of hysteria, and her work is of value to those who are anxious for

* *The Life of the Spirit and the Life of To-day*, by Evelyn Underhill. (Methuen; 7/6 net.) *Studies in Christianity*, by Clutton Brock (reprint). (Constable.) *The God Jesus Saw*, by W. Garrett Horder (Hazell; 6/- net.)

a more or less scientific view of their experiences. Her psychological method also enables Miss Underhill to supply practical advice to those who are anxious to tread in the footsteps of the mystics, and to live a life of self-possession and self-recollection in a distracted and distracting world. Many will find encouragement in passages like the following:

> 'The many people who complain that they have no such personal religious experience, that the spiritual world is shut to them, are usually found to have expected this experience to be given to them without any deliberate and sustained effort on their own part. They have . . . never given themselves the opportunity . . . yet all normal men and women possess, at least in a rudimentary form, some intuition of the transcendental; shown in their power of experiencing beauty or love. In some it is dominant, emerging easily and without help; in others it is latent and must be developed. . . .'
>
> 'All the great religions have implicitly understood the vast importance of these spiritual intuitions and faculties lying below the surface of the everyday mind; and have perfected machinery tending to secure their release and their training. This is of two kinds: first, religious ceremonial, addressing itself to corporate feeling; next the discipline of meditation and prayer . . .' (p. 93).

Apologists for institutional religion will discover more material in Miss Underhill's rational utterances than in the pseudo-historical propaganda which passes for good Church teaching. For example:

> 'A real Church has something to give to, and something to demand from each of its members, and there is a genuine loss for man in being unchurched. Because it endures through a perpetual process of discarding and renewal, those members will share the richness and experience of a spiritual life far exceeding their own time-span; a truth which is enshrined in the beautiful conception of the Communion of Saints. They enter a group-consciousness which reinforces their own in the extent to which they surrender to it: which surrounds them with favourable suggestions and gives the precision of habit to their instinct for Eternity' (p. 128).

Here it will not escape the attentive reader that 'a real Church' is subjected to 'a perpetual process of discarding and renewal.' As Miss Underhill's writings may be expected to penetrate into regions usually closed against rational invasions, we may hope that such *obiter dicta* will not pass unnoticed—for she here places her finger on the critical spot: Churchmen require to learn the meaning of this saying, and apply it to religious institutions: 'To live is to change, and to be perfect is to have changed often.'

We are delighted to see a reprint of Mr. Clutton Brock's *Studies in Christianity*. It presents in an attractive way certain important aspects of our religion which are sometimes overlooked by its official exponents. The author writes with the refreshing realism of one who has discovered Christianity for himself; in this he resembles Mr. G. K. Chesterton, who also is a more persuasive apologist than some others who invest themselves and their work with a great ponderousness.

What is peculiar about these two writers is their faculty (to use an old expression) to bring Christianity *home*. In their hands it seems something entirely natural, true, simple and reasonable. Christianity is for them a natural religion, not in the eighteenth century sense of being

a religion without any religious content, but in the sense that it is as natural to be a Christian as it is to admire a beautiful object, to be attracted by a child, or to love a kindly, generous, and simple-hearted man. It is the old story that the romantic is the every-day, and the Kingdom of Heaven lies within the human heart.

> 'We think that the Kingdom of Heaven, if there were such a thing, would come in the night and wake us all up. But the saying (it comes like a thief) means that it comes while we remain asleep. It is always with us; but we look for it to be advertised by signs and wonders: and, looking so, we are never aware of its presence and come to believe that there is no such thing' (p. 135).

But the cream of the book is found in the chapter on Grace—that subject which, as treated by theologians, can only be called terrible, but as treated by Mr. Clutton Brock, is robbed of its terrors, and of its non-religious rationality:

> 'We learn wisdom, not by wilful action, but by a right passive experience, not by aiming at the glory of Solomon, but by considering the lilies of the field. The will exists; but we cease to believe in its existence because we apply it at the wrong point. . . We are indeed impotent if we try to work a change on the world outside us rather than a change on ourselves. But if we can work the change on ourselves and experience rightly, then our own action will be right as a necessary result of our exercise of the will upon ourselves. This rightness will seem to others to be unwilled, because it is the character of our passibility, not of our activity, that we have willed. A man cannot be active according to his own values unless he has first been passive according to them' (p. 119).

Mr. Horder's book is a protest against those somewhat repulsive notions of the divine character which may be associated with the more primitive portions of the Old Testament, and with what has been called the Punic theology of Augustin and Calvin:

> 'We must lift the character of God up to the highest of which our thought is capable. As we see any examples of love, pity, forgiveness in man, we should say: "Yes, these are beautiful; but they are only broken lights of Thee, and Thou, O Lord, art more than they"' (p. 30).

The temper of this book is religious rather than theological. The theological temper is sharply criticised in the chapter, *Creeds and Confessions*:

> '(The Catholic and Protestant Churches) are alike in this, that they have both changed a simple into a difficult faith—a faith of pictures and poetry into one abstract and abstruse. Bear in mind the Twenty-third Psalm . . . or the parable of the Prodigal Son . . . and then read the creeds . . . in which the Christian Faith is declared to be defined' (p. 81).

Mr. Horder traces, as well as can be done in the space at his disposal, the source of the intellectualising tendency which fastened the Creeds on Christianity. And if the formulation of such creeds was, as Church historians tell us, a necessity; we have to observe also that a vigorous interest in theological speculation, or a strong reverence for doctrinal formularies, did not save Asia Minor or North Africa from being overwhelmed by a newer, and intellectually more simple, faith. Augustinian theology collapsed before Mohammed:

'What report would a traveller through Asia Minor or North Africa, where the Christian Church was once apparently firmly established on the basis of the Nicene Creed, bring to us of their condition to-day? Would he have to report that . . . they were rendered so weak by dependence on minute metaphysical distinctions that when Mohammedanism came along, with its simple doctrine of God, in spite of its coldness and hardness, they were powerless to resist and were swept out of existence' (p. 95).

The chapter, *The Right Attitude to the Word,* contains matter of interest to those responsible for the religious education of the young:

'"Did Isaac's mother know what was going to happen to him?" questioned an eight-year-old, adding, "I am sure she would never have let him go if she had known what his father was going to do."'

J. C. H.

## CHRISTIANITY AND THE PLAIN MAN.*

The Student Christian Movement, through its smaller publications, is doing to-day for the educated layman in England what the famous *Religionsgeschichtliche Volksbücher* achieved for a similar class of readers in Germany before the war. The conclusions of modern biblical scholarship are being brought within the reach of the ordinary man in a form in which they can be easily assimilated, by means of books written by men with competent knowledge, and issued at a price within the compass of the most modest purse. The six volumes which are here noticed together provide an admirable treatment of the subjects with which they deal.

Dr. Theodore Robinson's book, *St. Mark's Life of Jesus,* sends the reader back to the text of the Gospel with a heightened sense of its value as a historical document, and a more intelligent appreciation of the incidents and scenes which it portrays. The author's treatment of his material is modern in the best sense of that much abused word. While he sets Jesus of Nazareth where the Christian has always set Him, while he asserts that 'Jesus is the ultimate message of God to humanity,' yet the reality of the central figure of the story, and the vital human interest of the events it narrates, are never obscured. The effect of the personality of Jesus upon His contemporaries, and the reasons for the ever deepening hostility of the Pharisees, are described with exceptional clearness of insight. Some will perhaps doubt whether the conflict in the mind of Jesus between His work as Healer and His function as Preacher was in fact as irreconcilable as Dr. Robinson supposes, or whether the impression of restlessness in the constant movements of Jesus from place to place may not have been somewhat over-emphasised. Be that as it may, every reader will appreciate Dr. Robinson's fearless yet reverent attempt to penetrate into the significance of the Cross. A short note on Miracles at the end of the volume is characterised by a refreshing

* *St. Mark's Life of Jesus,* by Theodore H. Robinson. (S.C.M., 1922; pp. 134; price 4/- and 2/6.)
*The Stories of the Kingdom,* by G. R. H. Shafto. (S.C.M., 1922; pp. 196; price 4/6 and 3/-.)
*Personal Immortality,* by A. Gordon James. (S.C.M., 1922; pp. 148; price 3/6.)
*The Christian Faith and Some Alternatives,* by the Rev. J. R. Darbyshire. (S.C.M., 1921; price 2/6.)
*Our Faith in God,* by J. Ernest Davey. (S.C.M., 1922; pp. 139; price 3/6 and 2/6.)
*Everyday Religion,* by E. S. Woods. (S.C.M., 1922; pp. 253; price 5/-.)

unwillingness to dogmatise. The way is left open for the literal acceptance even of the Nature Miracles, but there is no hint of intolerance towards the holders of other views.

Mr. Shafto's exposition of the Parables meets, and meets adequately, a real need. He is rightly sensitive to the changes in our use of words, and still more in our ways of thinking, which have occurred inevitably since the publication of the Authorised Version. He knows the peril of familiarity, and the value of 'a change in the angle of approach.' His plan of prefacing the exposition of each parable with a frankly colloquial paraphrase, for the most part admirably achieved, does much to re-create for the modern reader the freshness and force of the original. Mr. Shafto has a clear eye for essentials, and so avoids successfully the fanciful and irrelevant theorising of many of his predecessors in the task of exposition. He understands the joy of the artist which Jesus must have experienced as a teller of homely tales, and he rightly appreciates a dictum of Dr. Jacks that 'Jesus' method consisted in fixing people's attention on some of the innumerable details of common life in which eternal values are revealed.' In pointing out that 'two sets of things may have the same mutual relations, though there is no resemblance between the things themselves, Mr. Shafto puts his finger on a cardinal principle of relevant interpretation. For, to take his own example, while it be true that the shepherd and the sheep may give a beautiful picture of the relations between Christ and His followers, yet to insist in detail on the points of likeness between Christians and sheep must lead inevitably to results which are merely ludicrous. The exposition of the parables is fresh, vigorous and often illuminating, and an admirable series of really thought-compelling questions, for use either in private meditation or group discussion, should add greatly to the usefulness of the volume.

The small book from the pen of Mr. Gordon James, described in a sub-title as 'an Enquiry into the Christian Doctrine of a Future Life,' should help many whose ideas on the subject of immortality have been confused or distorted by the antiquated forms in which the doctrine has been presented for their consideration. Having shown by reference to the attitude of Science, Philosophy, and modern Spiritualism, that 'there now exists a large mental background with which the claim for immortality does not conflict,' the author finds in the Christian doctrine of God the foundation for his constructive thought. It is in the character of God as Christ revealed Him that our ultimate assurance of immortality must lie. To reject immortality means therefore the rejection along with it of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Mr. James has a wholesome dread of crudely literal interpretations of things spiritual. His chapters on Hell and Heaven afford excellent examples of the manner in which such subjects may best be treated in the modern pulpit. He rightly condemns the inconsistency of many 'orthodox' Christians to-day, who, while clinging tenaciously to an inherited belief in a vindictive Hell, yet all the time are hoping that it may not be true. The issues are too great for subterfuge. If Hell is a reality, the modern conspiracy of silence is dangerous. Towards the doctrine of an Intermediate State and Prayers for the Dead, Mr. James adopts an attitude at once sane and sympathetic, while in the chapter on the Communion of Saints he leads us out of the sphere of argument into a realm of direct and intimate experience, where we can but be grateful for the knowledge of our guide. Towards Psychical Research and even Spiritualism Mr. James is not unfriendly. The enemy to-day is Materialism, and against Materialism

Spiritualism is a re-action, crude certainty, but inevitable, and so far to be welcomed.

Mr. Darbyshire's volume, *The Christian Faith and Some Alternatives*, which deals with Christian Science, Theosophy, and Spiritualism as substitutes for Christianity, is a re-print and expansion of the first Pilkington Lecture on Christian Evidences, which furnishes a good example of modern Christian apologetic. The lecturer can see good as well as bad in the systems which he attacks. He finds in their present popularity a clear indication of defective Christian teaching, and believes that Christianity properly understood contains all the positive truth which the suggested alternatives are trying to express. The problems of Pain, of Sin, and of Death, are ever with us. Non-Christian solutions are at best one-sided, and at worst definitely untrue. Accordingly, while the Christian will gladly extract what truth he can from the teachings of these cults, there is no place for genial compromise, nor for an attitude of all-inclusive hospitality. Christianity is Christ, and neither Christian Science, Theosophy, nor Spiritualism can give to Christ the place of assured supremacy for life and faith which He occupies in the New Testament writings.

Books likely to be of real assistance to the man whose thinking has led him to question the traditional presentation of the Christian Faith are unfortunately all too rare. Mr. Davey is to be congratulated on having added another to the list. His 'Apologetic Addresses' on the implications of the Christian view of God are a challenge to the thinker assailed by healthy doubt to go on thinking, to make experiments in the Christian way of living, and so to test for himself the Reasonableness, Necessity, Effectiveness, and Finality, of the Christian assertions. The author recognises that the whole of Christianity is contained implicitly in the Christian conception of God. He holds that many so-called atheists are such owing to 'the almost inevitable reaction against the almost inevitable misstatements of believers.' And of these the majority are atheists in name only—men and women loyal to truth, or love, or beauty, which are but other and better spellings of the name of God. Mr. Davey's condemnation of a conventional creed divorced from conduct is stern and uncompromising. Sooner or later every professed Christian must ask himself, 'Was Christ a fool, or had He the divine wisdom?' From the alternative there is no escape. The argument that the Christian faith in God is necessary for the living of the highest life is admirably presented. Only by the attainment of such a faith can men achieve that inner harmony of mind or spirit essential to the unimpeded release of self-forgetting activity. 'The challenge of doubt is often a blessing; but the acceptance of doubt is a morbid mental condition, the condition of a man who has thrown up the sponge.' Of the effectiveness of Christianity, whether judged by past achievements or present experience, there should be no question. But theory must issue in appropriate practice if results are to be achieved at all commensurate with the Christian affirmations. The spirit of Christ is the spirit of adventure. In that spirit we must test both the effectiveness and the finality of the Christian creed. For in Christianity 'we have the true satisfaction and rationale of the sporting instinct, and even of the gambling habit, which is but a meaner and more perverted form of the same thing.'

Mr. E. S. Woods is also concerned with the question of the application of Christianity to ordinary life. His book, *Everyday Religion*, is an attempt to deal with what he suggestively calls 'the problem of living together.' He believes that in Christ we have the solution of every aspect

—whether international or social—of this one supreme difficulty. The book is a suggestive and stimulating, if somewhat diffuse and discursive, elaboration of this contention. In a series of pleasantly written chapters, Mr. Woods discusses the effect of the Christian spirit upon the life and doings of every day. He would have us seek in common the purpose of Christ with reference to work and recreation, money and sex, health and beauty. If life is to be what Christ intended it should be, it must be shared. That is the conclusion of the whole matter. Perhaps the best chapter in a book which contains much that is of value is that on 'Christianity and Thought.' Mr. Woods has no sympathy with a second-hand religion, nor with the parrot cries of unthinking orthodoxy. A thinker himself, he would have his fellow-Christians achieve by hard and adventurous thinking a constructive and dynamic interpretation of the mind of Christ for the modern world. The book abounds in relevant quotations and in stories worth reading and repeating. One feels that the author thoroughly enjoyed writing it, and it is safe to predict that the pleasure of those who read it will be no less genuine.

W. Maurice Pryke.

# CORRESPONDENCE

## THE SWEDISH CHURCH.

Sir,

Having read with great interest in your November issue, the Rev. A. R. Watson's 'Glimpses of Swedish Church Life,' I should wish to thank the author for his sympathetic observations. One cannot but regret that he had no opportunity of taking part in a full Swedish High Mass, when the Holy Communion is celebrated as part of the Morning Service, which it is still in by far the greater number of churches, particularly in the country. Indeed this is the normal way.

In such an article a few slips are hardly avoidable. Some are of minor importance, *e.g.* that Prince Carl was present at the Ordination described, whereas it was only his representative. There is, however, one mistake of more importance. In St. Nicholas, the old city church of Stockholm, the large statue of St. George and the Dragon—a very remarkable piece of mediaeval wood-sculpture—was not taken in the Thirty Years' War, but was erected in this very church by the citizens of Stockholm to commemorate the victory won over the Danes at Brunkeberg in 1477.

Yngve Brilioth.

Uppsala, Sweden.

## THE NEED FOR A REVISED CATECHISM.

Sir,

It is ordered in the third rubric after the Catechism that 'so soon as children are come to a competent age' and can say 'this short catechism' they are to be confirmed. What is 'a competent age' for understanding and profiting by this peculiarly difficult part of the Prayer-book? One is inclined to answer that at *no* age can anyone repeat it without such mental reservations and explanations as gravely to impair his or her sense of truth.

In the early Christian days a 'catechumen' was an adult applicant for baptism, and before he was admitted from whatever his old faith was into the new Christian faith, he naturally required instruction and examination, in which the form of question and answer served the purpose best. Afterwards when Infant Baptism became general the parents were the instructors, and outside catechizing grew less necessary. The *Catholic Encyclo-*

*pedia*, however, lays great stress on the fact that all through the middle ages the custom of catechizing by the clergy was never lost. One thing is certain, that the Reformation caused a revival in this particular. The Waldenses had had a Catechism printed in 1498, but in 1529 Luther drew up no less than two forms, his Longer and Shorter Catechisms, which were soon followed by others in Protestant countries, while the Council of Trent in 1566 issued an official *Catechismus Romanus*.

In England the First Prayer-book of Edward VI, published in 1549, contained the first half of our present Catechism, based on two writings of Cranmer and compiled, it is said, by the three learned divines, Nowell, Poynet and Goodrich. In 1604 the second half explaining the Sacraments was added by the Hampton Court Conference. So for 300 years and more children from kindergarten age upwards have been learning our present Catechism, and each generation has had to have the various misleading statements explained away.

Let us take the stumbling-blocks *seriatim*.

The child repeats that his godfathers and godmothers gave him his name; if he has small brothers and sisters he knows that parents settle the name, and godparents have nothing whatever to do with the matter. But the second is serious. He says that in Baptism he was 'made the child of God,' and as soon as he can reason he says to himself, 'But wasn't I God's child before baptism?' and again a little later 'Aren't Quakers God's children? and Mohammedans and Jews?' Perhaps his teacher gets out of the difficulty by saying, as Robertson does in a sermon, that Baptism is a declaratory ordinance, and makes us children of God as coronation makes a king. This analogy may satisfy him till he realises that many lawful monarchs in countries outside England are never crowned at all. Then the child's perplexity begins again, and is increased by the Vows which his godparents have, most arbitrarily, as he thinks, made for him. He is to renounce the Devil, yet the modern child is liable to hear in any sermon that a Personal Devil is a subject of doubt to many Christians. He is also to renounce 'the pomps and vanity of this wicked world,' and he racks his small brain to think what that means. Is it fine clothes or jewels or motors? If so, how strange that all these three 'pomps' are usually in evidence at the christenings which he has attended! Can anyone give him a list of 'pomps' to be renounced, and if not, why not? Then he states that he is 'bound to believe and to do' as certain people whom he may not even know by sight, (not his parents, as is the sensible custom in the Dutch church), have promised for him. Could any arrangement, he thinks, be more unjust?

Then comes a respite, for with the Creed the child is probably familiar from Morning Prayer, and while he does not understand it all nothing in it is likely to 'offend' him, unless it be the 'descended into hell.' And the threefold explanation that follows appeals to his imagination with its three concentric circles, though the word 'elect,' with its suggestion of outcasts whom God the Holy Ghost does *not* sanctify, may somewhat distress his sense of fair play.

But now he arrives at the Commandments, and at least three, the second, the fourth and the fifth, are stumbling-blocks of grave magnitude. The first is merely unintelligible, or at least he feels that it does not in any way apply to him, but the second it terrible. First there is the apparent prohibition of the sculptured and painted forms he sees all around him. Then he repeats that God is 'jealous,' a word which from babyhood he has been taught to associate with one of the ugliest of sins. Finally he is confronted with a picture of a vindictive Ruler, Who pursues His enemies to

the fourth generation. Can this, thinks the child, be the God of Love of the gospels? or even the God of the prophet Ezekiel, who in chapter xviii, as he has heard in church, preaches the doctrine of individual responsibility? The fourth raises insuperable difficulties in his mind. If we are to keep the Jewish Sabbath or Seventh Day, why do we keep it on Sunday which is the first day? And if 'no manner of work' is permissible to anyone in the household, why must the servants cook, and wait, and wash up? And the fifth—what a strange reason for respecting ones parents! and whatever can obedience have to do with long life? So the child toils on through all the ten Commandments, and then, perhaps one day he hears the American Holy Communion service read, and wishes he could learn instead the glorious twofold summary of Our Lord Himself, the true 'fulfilling of the Law.'

The 'Duties' come next, and the first, though hard to learn, probably gives pleasure to the child with its beautiful rhythm, but the 'Duty towards my neighbour' has at least two pitfalls. Who are the 'betters' to whom the child must order himeslf lowly and reverently? are they his elders, and if so why does it not say so? or is he to be judging and weighing the goodness of people about him? or does it mean, as the last sentence of the 'Duty' suggests, that the Catechism is really intended for the children of the poor, who are expected to consider the rich their betters? In well-to-do homes, moreover, the little girls at least are seldom encouraged to 'learn and labour truly to get their own living,' and it seems to them absurd to pretend they will.

After this the Lord's Prayer with its explanation is as an oasis before the desert of 'The Sacraments.' Surely many adults who read these lines must remember the mystification as well as the tedium with which they learnt by rote these lengthy explanations which explained nothing. In the very first answer, 'generally necessary to salvation,' is obscure to the child. Is 'generally' to be taken in the usual sense, or is it true that it means 'universally,' in which case those who do not use the Sacraments are not to have 'salvation'? If so the old difficulty about the 'child of God' crops up once more. In the fifth answer we meet this problem again. 'How was I a child of wrath?' the child may well ask, and when he is old enough to look up for himself the quotation from St. Paul, he sees that it applies to adult heathens, not to children of Christian homes. The seventh answer makes him feel anew how unfairly in Baptism he was trapped, so to speak, without his own consent, while the cogent arguments for Infant Baptism, *i.e.* Our Lord's welcome to little children and the probable practice of the Apostles in New Testament history, are not put forth. So, indignant and perplexed, he arrives at the 'Sacrament of the Lord's Supper,' over which he troubles less, as the matter seems comfortably remote. And so Finis.

Now if we elders will search our own memories, we must surely admit that the above account is no travesty. As a matter of fact all these perplexities and heart-burnings occured either to me as a child or to my own children. Of course you can explain everything away if you choose, but is not this religious insincerity, this saying one thing and meaning another, a very serious blot on our Christian civilisation? Is it not conceivable that the often deplored indifference of many Christian adults to the Church may be partly due to the fact that as children they were, according to the old cynical definition of Faith, professing to believe what they knew was not true? If anything in the Prayer-Book needs revising, surely it is the Catechism with its 'science falsely so called.'

G. G. Buckler.